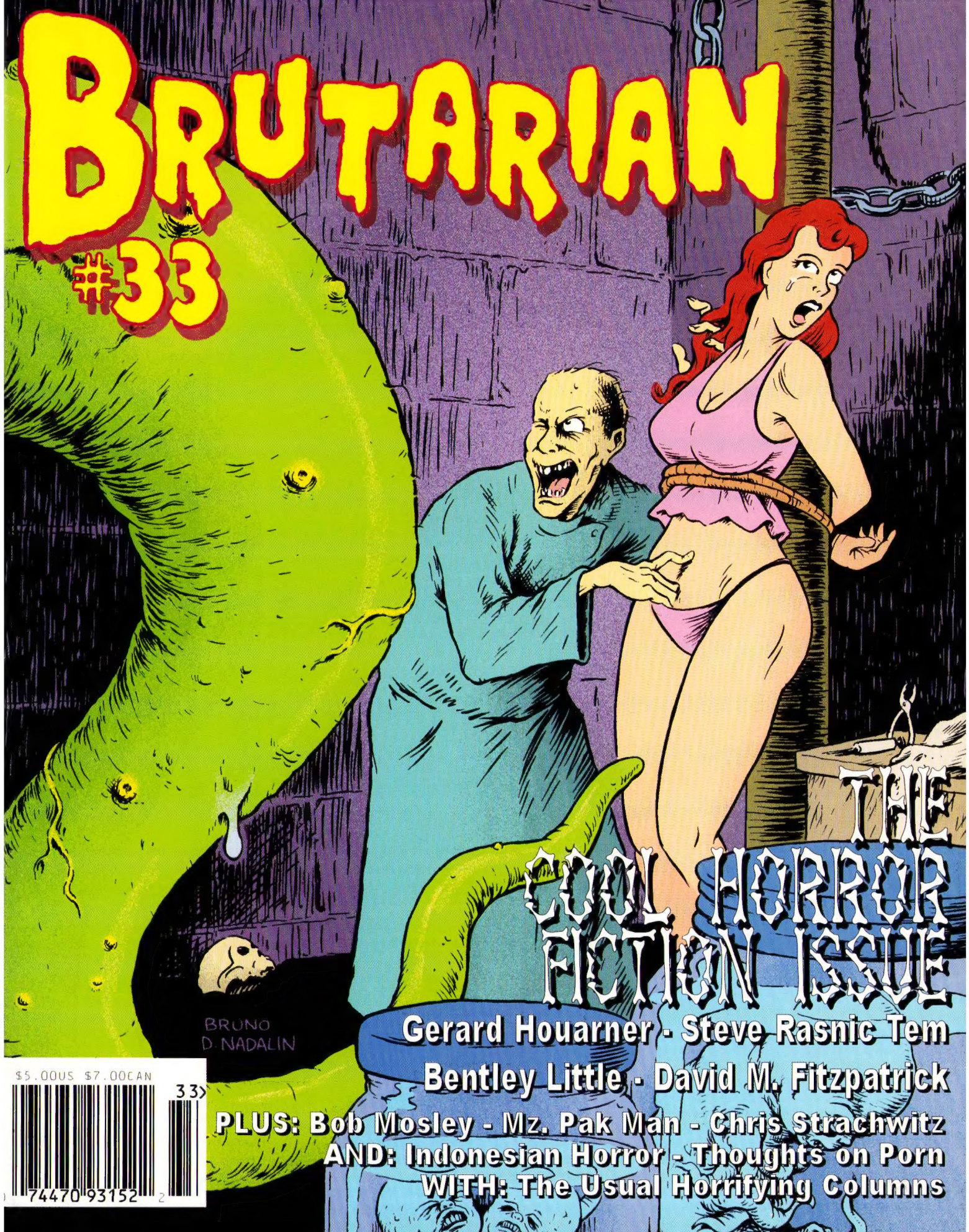


BRUTARIAN

#33



THE COOL HORROR FICTION ISSUE

Gerard Houarner - Steve Rasnic Tem

Bentley Little - David M. Fitzpatrick

PLUS: Bob Mosley - Mz. Pak Man - Chris Strachwitz

AND: Indonesian Horror - Thoughts on Porn

WITH: The Usual Horrifying Columns

\$5.00US \$7.00CAN

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Hypocrisy Justified

My Fellow Sinners,

Recently, I have found myself subject to criticism from a number of quarters concerning my out-of-wedlock child. Mostly from white people. So let me explain: it's a black thing. You wouldn't understand. As Ralph "Malph" Abernathy, noted fellow freedom fighter liked to say after a couple of joints and a six-pack: "I ain't doin' it for the riches, merely for the bitches!"

I would add to that a hearty "amen" and this from my lawyer, Johnny Cochran, who is representing me in this matter:

"If it felt like the perfect fit, then you have not choice but to jam on it."

—Jessie "The Body" Jackson
Dazed and Confused, III

A Woman's Prerogative

My Fellow Americans,

Like you're surprised: I did a 360 as regarding caring about world peace and pollution. Why, I can't even spell world peace and pollution. Fact is, I can't even read and write. I just pretend to read the teleprompter while that Cheney fella and my daddy whisper in my ear.

—Dubya Bush
Idiot, Texas

Open-Minded On the Air

Radio Lovers,

You know what sucks? Fucking queers, that's what!

—Dr. Laura Schlesinger
Homophobe, CA

What Is Our Problem?

Excuse us!

It has come to our attention that you are going to be publishing a "cool horror fiction issue" in late spring. You're touting this as fiction by some of the best horror writers around. We're a bit confused because we've just formed a partnership over here and none of us has been asked to submit a story. What the hell is up with that? If you don't either include our works or retract the comment about "some of the best" right away, we're gonna sue you.

—King, Koontz, Barker, Straub,
and Rice, the best, and we
don't care what you say

He Really Blows Us Away

Hey Salemi:

I just heard that you and that Oliver creep

are both Federal Government workers. Just wait til I get out of here, and get my hands on some high grade racing fuel and a couple a tons of nitrogen fertilizer, I'll fix both of you, you sorry sumbitches... just wait'll you see the collateral damage I do to you!

—Timothy McVeigh, #1347682
Shitcreek, Oklahoma

We Thought the Answer Was "His Ass-hole"

Dom Baby!

I'd just like to share with the you the very last thing that entered my mind the other day.
BOOM!!!!!!!!!!!!

—Dale Earnhardt
Big Race Track in the Sky

Very Statuesque

By Mohammed's Beard!

Since when did fat bald guys in dresses become the Western standard of beauty? And no, J. Edgar Hoover doesn't count!

—The Taliban
Buddha Bing, Buddha Bang
Afghanistan

Fly the Friendly Skies

American Scum!

If you continue to fly spy plane missions over international waters far off our shores, we promise you this: China will not rest until we have run all our pilots through *flight school* so the next time they have an opportunity to fly dangerously close to you, we will be sure to destroy you BOTH!

Incidentally, the joke is on YOU. With all the top secret spy equipment we tore out of your plane, we might now be able to locate the pieces of honorable Wang Wei's body! HA!

—Yank Mai Wi Li
Wee Dum Fux, China

He's A Few Asteroids Short of a Belt

NASA,
Fuck your ethics. Fuck your rules. Fuck your unbelievable majority share of the cost, the labor, the intelligence, and so on. I'm selfish. I'm rich. I'm a Commie bastard from way back and everyone knows it. I paid my way and you know what, I just might do it again. In fact, if you keep making me look bad in the press, I'll just buy out the Russians' share and start telling YOU what to do up there.

—Dennis Tito, In orbit

What a Revelation

Dear Bruts:

I'm confused. The Pope is here visiting and even in a mosque. Aren't we supposed to declare a *jihad* on everyone? Aren't they really trying to convert us? Which reminds me: you bastards are worse than Rushdie ever was. You insult Islam with the blasphemy you publish! We declare a *jihad* on you! Allah wills it!

—Mohammed al Mohammed bin
Mohammed ack Mohammed

But We'd Fuck Her Anyway

Sirs:

I'd just like to thank you for all the support and kindness you generous folks have shown me over the years with your more-than-fair movie reviews and nice comments about my films in particular! My life just feels so complete, now that I've finally won my first Oscar... seven or eight more, and I'll even forget about getting drunk and fucking Lyle Lovett all those times.

—Julia Roberts
Primadonna, CA

Wrassle This!

Dear Dom:

Now that I finally own WCW, lock, stock & barrel, I'd like to get this off my chest. Ted Turner, you are a pansy! Everyone knows you take it up the ass from Jane Fonda and her strap-on. I, on the other hand, take it like a true man — each night from my WWF superstars, bareback and dry... the way it SHOULD be!

—Vince (Don't Mention XFL) McMahon
Stanford, CT, and the
Backstage Men's
Room of the set
of *Raw Is War*

Mr. Salemi:

Goddammit, the above letter is a big shock! Daddy told me I was his one and only!

—Shane McMahon
Greater Analsex, CT

Hey Shane (c/o Brutarian):

Get used to it! I even showed him my severed ear that I keep in a jar - it doesn't matter, I'm sure he's cheated on me hundreds of times, the bitch!!!

—Mick Foley
aka Mankind
aka Cactus Jack
Schizophrenia, New Mexico

BRUTARIAN

The Cool #33
Horror Fiction Issue

The Cool Horror Fiction

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"It is easy to break a man's heart;
one has merely to tell him that his
life's work is worth nothing."

—Antonin Artaud



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Arhoolie Records' Founder and President

CHRIS STRACHWITZ

Chats About Collecting and Recording Regional Music in America and vents on the Subjects of

MISSISSIPPI, Disco, and Hippie Shit

**by
John Adamian**

In recent years the recordings of several musicologists and/or record collectors have been re-released on CD with great fanfare and lionization—the extensive American field recordings of Alan Lomax, the landmark work of traditional and popular African music that Hugh Tracey originally produced for BBC radio, and the much-celebrated *Anthology of American Folk Music* compiled by Harry Smith, which helped fuel the folk revival upon its release in 1952. Recently a five-CD set commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Arhoolie label was released; the set, *The Journey of Chris Strachwitz*, can take its place proudly among these other lauded sets and re-issues.

Arhoolie is known mostly for its rich catalog of blues, cajun, and tejano legends — if you've heard of zydeco it's largely because of Arhoolie. As the set demonstrates, the German-born Strachwitz was game for recording whatever he liked, and his tastes were wide-ranging; in addition to the label's specialties, he also recorded Appalachian old time music, gospel, klezmer, free jazz, bluegrass, and New Orleans brass bands, along with several acts that defy categorizing.

The following is an interview I had with Strachwitz about how he got started in the record business and how he managed to continue, with such remarkable projects, for the last 40 years.

BRUTARIAN: Did you start out by collecting old 78s?

CHRIS STRACHWITZ: Yeah, that's how it started. Old records and new ones too. That was the thing back then. The first ones I remember getting into was "Remember Me" and "Oklahoma Hills" on the other side, by a guy named T. Texas Tyler, a wonderful country singer on Four Star Records.

BRUT: Aside from just having a tape recorder and liking the music, what made you think you could go out and document this music?

CS: Well, I figured others have done it, so why not join the parade? I learned mostly from several people here in the Bay Area, one was Bob Geddins, who had all kinds of labels. He was a black man from Texas, and he recorded old blues and spirituals. I used to hang out at his place. That's how I got the recording of Big Joe Williams, Bob Geddins told me he was in the Bay Area and in jail. He paid Big Joe's bail. He pulled this tape out one day, I was up here visiting him, I was teaching school in Los Gatos you see, and he said "Come on Chris you gotta listen to this," and of course I knew it was Big Joe. I said "Where'd you get that? Did you go to Chicago?" and he said "No man, I just went his bail." He was out in Graystone, and that's how we made that incredible powerful LP, it was number two in our catalog. A few days later a friend of mine drove him down to Los Gatos, where I was living, and he sat down in my living room

(laughs)—living room, more like a one-room country shack, and just cut those numbers for me, very intense. And of course, during that summer I had already gone to Texas and recorded a number of other people, including Mance Lipscomb. Of course my aim was to record Lighting (Hopkins), but it flew out the window. So I made Mance Lipscomb the number one record (in the Arhoolie catalog) because Mack McCormick said, "Listen Chris, this is the oldest stuff you'll ever hear. This man goes back to the beginnings of African-American folk song." And he was an incredible repository for all of it, not just blues, but spirituals and play songs and children's songs and pop songs and fiddle tunes and ballads. I mean it was amazing, he even sang some verses from "Lord Thomas" that he used to learn from his mother. He was just absolutely extraordinary and a wonderful human being on top of that. That's how that all kind of happened.

BRUT: I was looking at the credits on the box set and it seems to me that you've probably spent a good chunk of the past forty years down in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

CS: Mostly Texas and Louisiana. You see, Mississippi was just too bleak for me. And there was no liquor, that's something I didn't mention in the box set. The religions of these various places have a lot to do with it. Southern Louisiana being Catholic you can always confess your sins the next day. That makes for good honky tonk life. But the Bible Belt — Northern Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, all that shit — it is totally useless, as far as live music. There's no beer joints. Texas is another completely different story. They allowed beer joints. You could put a beer joint next to a church in the middle of the block. I mean it is absolutely amazing—it's total wild west. But they've been voting in all these zoning laws. Now they're tearing these neighborhoods apart. I think it's outrageous. It's more civilized if you have everything right there in the neighborhood.

BRUT: Do you feel like

that's your second home down there?

CS: Yeah, I do feel Texas is pretty much my second home. Especially the border, I've really become very, very attached to that area. First of all the music is still like it was back then in the 50s and 60s. Musicians everywhere. Real rural stuff. You can go to those little towns and look forward to recording somebody. Actually they're paying the companies to make records of them, so they have something to sell at their dances. Yeah, it's a wide open field. But the trafficking back-and-forth along the border is a real dreadful scenario—not only the dope coming in from Mexico, but the arms going in to Mexico. I mean this shit is really the devil's sword. There's no way they can ever stop it. Certainly I don't want them to ever consider sending the military down there. That's how that horrible tragedy happened about Esequiel Hernandez in Redford, Texas. Where our own Marines shot this boy.

BRUT: I don't know anything about that.

CS: It's actually on the box set. On the last CD it's the corrido about Esequiel Hernandez, by Santiago Jimenez. It's a very heavy scenario. And the Quakers made it possible for the people of Redford to go to Washington to lobby against the continued arming of the borders. They are very good folks. . . . This is all pretty heavy stuff, you see. This is not no "big mama, meat shakin' off her bones," of course that's one part



*Chris Strachwitz and Clifton Chenier
("the King of Zydeco")*

of vernacular music, but there's a lot of very heavy stuff here.

BRUT: The box set is organized chronologically, and it really captures the way that your tastes changed over forty years, or maybe your sense of having fully explored a region.

CS: It was also somewhat commercially influenced. You see I never could record in New Orleans. I loved New Orleans jazz. First of all there were lots of people doing it. And they were all Union bands, and I simply couldn't afford it. While blues singers seemed to be totally relative. Money was a very relative matter. You know, to someone like Little Son Jackson and Lightning (Hopkins), they wanted their 100 dollars per song. On the other hand somebody like Mance Lipscomb was absolutely delighted to get 35 dollars a song. When he got his check his wife said to Mance, "That was the most money you ever made." It's such a totally relative thing. This pure vernacular stuff is generally fairly accessible to somebody like myself because there's no lawyers involved, there's no unions, no nothing, and so I slowly learned — thank goodness I did learn from my friend Ed Denson — that I really needed to protect these peoples' songs in the form of music publishing. That took a while. That was the most important obligation that I had toward these people, who were basically much more down-to-earth than I was. They were ignorant of a lot of technicalities.

BRUT: And music copyrighting is pretty arcane, even for people who have studied up on it.

CS: I know, I know. Most people haven't got a clue.

BRUT: Copyrighted music was actually a big part of the revenue that kept Arhoolie going, right? From Country Joe and the Fish? *[Strachwitz earned royalties from Country Joe's "Fixin' To Die Rag"—"One, two three, what are we fighting for?"]*

CS: That's right, from Country Joe on forward. Fred McDowell and the Stones ("You Got To Move") and the most recent one is the Alan Jackson ("Mercury Blues," which has become the "Crazy 'Bout a Ford Truck" jingle). I owned one-fourth of that copyright (laughs), after all of the wheeling and dealing I had to do, I kept one fourth of it.

BRUT: I imagine that one fourth is still something, on a commercial that gets played every day.

CS: Oh yeah, (laughs) one-fourth of two million is a lot!

BRUT: One of the things that really interested me from the box set is the track by Bongo Joe. Can you tell

me a little about Bongo Joe?

CS: We have a whole CD of Bongo Joe, but . . . he was already . . . over the hill, I hate to put it like that but. The problem was, the primary one was, my little tape recorder — I had a real cheap little Dewey's — it of course ran out of batteries as soon as I got in front of Joe. I had with me my big Magnacord in the trunk. I asked him to come to my friend's house. We went to his house, and the only audience was myself, my friend and his two children. So he basically had to improvise totally. He was used to having a good crowd. If you ever want to hear one of his most extraordinary recordings, it's on an old LP that Mack McCormick put together for the British 77 label. It's called something like "Folk Songs." He recorded it live in Galveston. That's where Bongo Joe was from. He had this cart, a wheel barrel with a bucket, an oil can, and this transistor, and those axes that he kept to chop away at the cans. He wanted to be a bebop drummer. BBC played the hell out of "Innocent Little Doggie."

BRUT: Do you feel like the Sacred Steel playing is something of a fluke? *[Arhoolie and Strachwitz are largely responsible for bringing to light a tradition of gospel steel guitar playing in churches in Florida and NY]*

CS: Well I was delighted to hear it. I had always suspected that there was still something happening with the Holiness Church. I had first encountered that denomination when I recorded Rev. Overstreet back in the 60s. Listen to the ones that had little jazz bands, Rev. Kelsey. And from the 1920s, Rev. McGee, that's the one that jazz fans love, I think there was a jazz band. Anyway, there was great stuff like that from the past, so I was somewhat familiar, but I was absolutely delighted when I heard that particular package that Bob Stone had put together for the state of Florida.

BRUT: I've noticed record stores that have entire sections devoted to Sacred Steel, and it's surprising how quickly that music has become a genre unto itself.

CS: People could never find it. They didn't know if it was under gospel, or under blues or under folk, or god knows where. Categorizing is a tough business.

BRUT: That's one of the things that's nice about the box set, that you seem to have not really concerned yourself with categorizing too much.

CS: Well that's why we've never really succeeded in any field (laughs).

BRUT: On the box set there are a few tracks of groups that play music that is not from North America, the Afghani music, the Austrian singing, and the drum

troupe from Belize. I was wondering if there are any places, like South America or Africa, that you've considered traveling to in order to record.

CS: Yeah, certain areas interest me a lot, others don't. Of course, Austria was a particular favorite of mine. I was born in Germany, and I was sent back, in the U.S. Army, to Austria, and I loved that place. I found out that there were still people who were doing yodeling. When I met Johnny Parth (founder of Document Records), when I went over there with Lightning Hopkins in the 60s, I said, "Well you must have something like the blues over here?" he said "Well we've got these yodelers," and I said "let's go dig 'em up." That's how it goes.

I learned a lot when I encountered a Balkan group that comes actually from Belgium and Germany, because I decided, just like with the New Lost City Ramblers, maybe I'll have to open my ears to the fact that interpreters maybe actually better. Because the real ethnic music can be really functional music that just goes on and on and on for dances, and it can be schmaltzy. Because they've got to play all night long.

BRUT: A lot of people who are interested in the blues or in old time music have a sense that the music stopped happening in the past, either in 30s or the 50s, and the history of Arhoolie really turns that idea on its end. I was wondering what you'd say to anybody who's interested in going out there and hunting down unheard music.

CS: Well you have to be much more careful about the legal and moral aspects than we did back then. Back then it seemed like, when you were driving in the segregated south, business was almighty. That was the only thing that mattered in the world. "If it's business, it must be legitimate." I'll never forget getting stopped with a black musician by a cop in Clarksdale, Mississippi. I had out-of-state plates, so he knew something was up. And he came up to the car and said, "what kind of business you in?" I had a box of old 78s that I had bought in the back seat and I said "I'm in the record business." He shined his flashlight back there and saw the records and said "Okay, but take your nigger on home," or something awful like that. But the business made it alright.

That's not necessarily true today. You have poor folklorists today trying to figure out what's fair. It can get really hairy. We have this extreme of wealth and poverty in this world. I mean there's John Cohen, for example, who spent years and years in Peru, researching and filming Indians in the mountains. He always had given them something, animals or trinkets, or a little bit of money. All of sudden he returned, and they were literally going to stone him. Thank goodness the village elder intervened at the last minute and he told John, he said "Listen, I know you've been giving us these little peanuts, but Japanese TV came here last year and they paid us thousands of dollars to film our culture. We now want the same from you." I think he had to give them

three truck loads of alpacas. Each region is different. In Mexico it's relatively simple. They've had unions, so there's more or less of a set rate for recording.

BRUT: Do you have any interest in hip hop?

CS: Well, if the rappers would put Charlie Christian on guitar I might have recorded it. I find it an interesting poetry revival, but I can't stand that goddamn disco beat. I hated disco when it came out.

BRUT: Since last year was alleged to be the year of Latin music, I was wondering if that had any influence on the sales of your Mexican, Tex-Mex and tejano recordings.

CS: Well the stuff that I have re-issued and have recorded and have paid attention to really has nothing to do with this contemporary pan-Latin pop shit.

BRUT: Since you were in the Bay Area in the late 60s, I was wondering if you ever considered recording any bands that were a part of the psychedelic scene.

CS: Oh, the hippie shit. I remember going to some of the happenings, one in particular when they hired the Count Basie band. But I never liked that hippie shit. To me it didn't have a real beat. I like New Orleans jazz, cajun music, church music, blues—music with a beat. That's heartbeat music.

BRUT: Do you have anything in the works that you're excited about?

CS: We have this new Sacred Steel video that I'm really excited about. I'm working on a Serbo-Croatian record, and it needs the same treatment as all that other music. Just the cataloging is what I'm really into with the Arhoolie Foundation. All these wonderful little labels that sprang up after WWII, you see there all in danger of being totally lost. The families of these people who made them usually don't give a damn about the stuff that was done, and the masters are usually lost at the pressing plant. Unless you have good copies of the discs, they're gone. That was the powerful period right after the war—'47, '48, '49, '50, '51, '52—everywhere ethnic music was being recorded, and it was in such a dynamic state, just like country music, and Elvis, and all that stuff. They were all really kicking ass! These polka bands in Chicago, they just "boom'ba'boom'ba'boom" you know, they really kicked ass! What kept all of this music alive was the tradition of social dancing. It hit me when I went to Louisiana; the poor people kept dancing!

BQ

John Adamian obviously writes. If you want to learn more about him, visit his bio page on our site:

www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/others/adamianjohn.htm

P R I M I

The World of Indonesian Horror

An American graduate student's head flies away from her body, her intestines and lungs trailing behind her in the breeze. A suave martial artist is transformed into a "were-pig" by an evil sorcerer. A band of Asian babes in halter tops, hot pants and thigh-high boots mount their dirt bikes to do battle with drug lords...

All of these lurid situations and images should be readily familiar to followers of Indonesian horror and exploitation films. *Mystics In Bali* (1981), *Warrior and the Ninja* (1987) and *Virgins from Hell* (1987) from which the above scenes originate from respectively have delighted discerning western audiences with their exotic, flavorful elements.

Shot quickly and with very little, if any budget, these films entertain with jury-rigged special effects, silent movie plots and an overall cinematic technique that could be charitably called "rustic."

Many extenuating factors contribute to these movies' appeal. Usually set in the lush, dense forests and jungles of its homeland, peopled with natives who live a way of life untouched by industrialized society, these films cater to the video armchair traveler. Indonesian films also have a fierce integrity to them, untouched by irony and sophistication. A film set in a village with mud walls, bamboo roofs and wandering livestock has the undeniable ring of authenticity to it. These are no movie sets. The viewer gets the impression that once the movie lights were switched off from the generators, the film crew retired to hammocks slung between palm trees to continue shooting the next day.

A certain cultural ignorance surrounding these films adds to their aura. Only occasionally using conventions found in Western movies, the Indonesian horror film has little or no use for vampires and werewolves. These films dip deeply into Southeast Asia's rich folkloric tradition, offering sights and sounds found nowhere else.

Before the viewer plunges in with a machete a pith helmet into this rough cinematic terrain, two things must be kept in mind. First, Indonesia is a fiercely Islamic nation, most unusual for this part of the world. Islamic symbols and motifs pop up continually through these films, as well as informing their sensibilities. While graphic violence is plentiful and nauseating, few Indonesian films feature female nudity below the shoulders. This results in odd, ethnocentric situations. *I Want to Get Even* (1988) features a bad guy being blown into fleshy tissue by a bazooka — but the leading lady is not photographed below the face in her frequent rape scenes.

Another factor in these films is that all were made under the iron-fisted rule of President Suharto. As recounted in the film *The Year of Living Dangerously*, the Javanese strongman expelled the communists from power in a bloody coup and took control in 1967. Welcomed by the West who was then concerned with the spread of communism in that part of the world, the Indonesian proletariat began to enjoy limited modernization and a certain economic prosperity under his reign. As Pete Tombs' explains in his indispensable examination of world exploitation cinema *Mondo Macabro*, these films were intended for a blue-collar, working-class audience who demanded escapist fare. Fantastical in nature, these motion pictures were intended for the worker done with his shift at the American-owned oilrig. These films could be read as part and parcel of Su-

harto's bread-and-circuses governorship. The regime was not above forcibly removing a film from theaters that did not suit its purposes — *Lady Terminator* (1988) was yanked after a 10-day run when it became apparent it would become the popular film in Indonesian history.

Suharto resigned in 1998 amidst accusations of corruption. Indonesia today remains a politically unstable land, that like most Third World Nations, nothing encouraging is heard from. Ethnic riots and violence are a daily occurrence. Its currency, the rupiah, plummeted on the world market and was a chief contributing factor to the Asian economic crisis of the past century.

One casualty of all of this upheaval appears to have been its genre cinema. In the seventies and eighties, independent producers along with established studios such as Rapi Films ground out product that found broad appeal among the people of the world's fourth most populous nation.

At their best, these movies drop the viewer in a strange jungle wilderness populated with strange beings, sights and sounds. The viewer is left to hack their way through the underbrush without a compass. People who have covered this terrain before many times find it's a trip worth taking over, again and again.

Three early efforts

While Indonesia has had a bustling film industry since the 1930s and beyond, we will begin this survey with three features shot in the late 1970s, early 1980s. One follows the template of countless Asian fantasy films; another mimics a Western horror film almost shot-by-shot and winds up putting its own distinct spin on things; and the third tries to cash in on an exploitation staple only to get it gloriously, hilariously wrong.

Penangkal Ilmu Teluh (Circa 1978; loose English translation: *Black Magic Talisman Knowledge*) directed by S.A. Karim, is a typical supernatural Asian horror film. A husband in a rural farming village thinks his wife is being unfaithful and enlists the aid of a local wizard to cast spells against her perceived lover. Bargain basement special effects ensue, as another wizard is enlisted to do battle in a war of magic. One especially graphic scene has the village round-heeler stricken with premature aging, leaving her face terribly wrinkled. Seeking the services of a witch, the woman undergoes a Third World "chemical peel" where the hag flays the woman's face with dull knives. The witch then applies a thick cream that is peeled away as a mask, restoring the woman's face to its previous beauty.

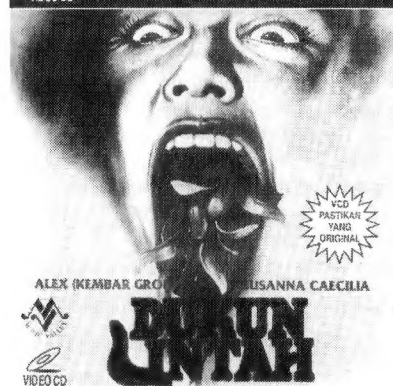
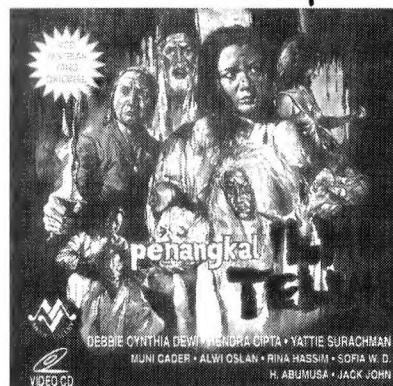
Any viewer familiar of the horror films of Hong Kong, South Korea, Cambodia, Japan and Vietnam will instantly recognize the flimsy plot. Sexual jealousy, real or imagined, causes one of the characters to use magical means against their unfaithful lover. It would be easy to assume that these films prey upon the distrust, superstitions and xenophobia of their intended audiences. Hong Kong horror films in particular have an unspeakable dread surrounding people from Mainland China, Macao and Taiwan.

This conclusion is overly facile. A casual viewing of any of these

T I L V E S

and Exploitation Cinema

by
Greg Goodsell



movies reveals that any character that resorts to magic — either for vengeance or to combat witchcraft, is doomed to failure. Even the most sympathetic characters that seek the assistance of a shaman or sorcerer invariably come to a bad end. The true Asian horror film routinely admonishes the viewer to reject the ancient fears and superstitions from which it draws its inspiration.

Another thing entirely is *Dukun Lintah* (loose English translation: *Leech Warlock*, circa 1978), directed by Ackyl Anway, the scriptwriter of *Penangkai*. It closely follows Asian horror film conventions as well. A young man's advances to a rich girl are rejected as she takes her true love's hand in marriage. The young man seeks the services of a jungle witch doctor, which as the title suggests uses bloodsuckers to mete out vengeance. *Dukun Lintah* then abruptly turns into a slavish, frame-by-frame remake of David Cronenberg's *Shivers/They Came from Within* (1975)! Viewers will recognize and begin to mentally check off scenes lifted in their entirety from the original, almost down to the camera angles.

What makes *Dukun Lintah* so fascinating is not its blatant plagiarism (Cronenberg's attorneys are either unaware of this film's existence or assume all they could get in damages would be earthen pots and rice), but how the narrative plays in a diametrically opposed setting. *They Came from Within's* gross-out sequences are reproduced in loving detail; leeches swim up a bathing beauty's nether regions as she soaks in a river, the hero tries to stuff the parasites in his mouth once they're removed from his stomach, a fat, elderly woman becomes a sex-crazed maniac, et cetera. It soon becomes abundantly clear that a horror film about the alienation of modern life simply doesn't play the same after the setting is changed from a sterile apartment complex to a mud-caked village with outdoor privies — although it does make for some fascinating comparisons. It comes as no surprise that the leech-infected villagers in *Dukun Lintah* do not go on to infect the outside world as in the original, but revert to happy villagers after a holy man says a prayer.

How Indonesian filmmakers take a particular story or genre element and tailor it to parochial tastes is highly evident in *Primitives* (1978). Shot at a time when movies such as *Make Them Die Slowly* and *Cannibal Holocaust* were packing them in grindhouses, director Sisworo Gautama gathers all the appropriate elements and bluntly

refuses to follow any of this sub-genre's conventions. How, you may ask? *Primitives* is the only Third World Cannibal movie from a Third World nation without the slightest trace of cannibalism in it. A careful viewing of the film shows villagers scarfing frogs, turtles and in the film's show-stopping draw — a live crocodile as it snaps at the savage's grasping hands — but no human flesh.

Primitives follows a trio of intrepid city explorers, led by Indo-trash perennial Berry Prima in search of an undiscovered jungle tribe. Predictably, our heroes fall into the clutches of a gang of savages who delight in trussing them up and forcing them to eat Gila monster pate. They manage to escape, but not before the bespectacled, nerdy member of their party dies from his wounds. In a poignant moment, his life flashes before his eyes of happier times, i.e. eating snow cones in a filthy water slide park!

The cannibal genre that enjoyed a vogue in the late 1970s was essentially the product of white Europeans (Italians, mostly) contrasting the differences between brute savages and "civilized man." Films in this canon are rife with racism and xenophobia while simultaneously pointing out the inherent brutality of modern civilization. *Primitives* can't begin to address these themes, because, well... it features Southeast Asians being menaced by Southeast Asians in third-rate cave-man outfits!

Such an ill-advised attempt is revealed early on in the musical cue that occurs immediately after savages in a jungle glen dispatch a man; as the credits roll, it's not chanting or percussion we hear but Kraftwerk's electro-funky "We Are the Robots!"

These films out of the way, we now turn our eyes to an important Indonesian feature that used its naiveté and lack of polish to literally cast a spell on this reviewer to go in search for other videos from this far-flung land.

Mystics In Bali (1981)

It all began after a friend of mine loaned me this video he said he absolutely hated. *Mystics In Bali*, along with *The Boxer's Omen* (1983), is the one feature that left me scratching my head in wonderment as to what planet this broadcast was transmitting from.

Mystics In Bali, directed by H. Tjut Djalil was at one time a hot and widely discussed commodity on the U.S. video bootleg circuit that fulfilled

the viewer's demands for... something different.

The film opens against a montage of Balinese dream warrior masks. The story concerns American occult scholar (Ilona Agathe Bastian) Katherine Keane, fresh off the plane to research Balinese Leak (pronounced Lee-ak) Black Magic. Enlisting the aid of her native boyfriend Mahendra (Yos Santo), they arrange a meeting with a practicing witch in the nearby rain forest. The hag, who keeps her decaying face hidden in the darkness agrees to instruct Kathy in exchange for bottles of human blood.

Returning the following night with withdrawals from the local blood bank, the witch begins to instruct Kathy on the ways of Leak sorcery. But the cackling hag enacts a big price from Kathy, as the crone gradually regains her youthfulness, and Kathy becomes an unwilling pawn in a climactic battle between demonic forces.

Mystics In Bali gives the Third World special effects unit ample opportunity to indulge in cut-rate theater. They are plentiful, and all would not fool a preschooler. Kathy and her witch instructor shape shift into snakes and pigs through the wonder of clay and papier-mâché. A gigantic serpent tongue that extends through the forest is an all too obvious hand puppet. Battling wizards and magicians are represented by basketballs set on fire and suspended on fishing line.

In the film's most notorious scene, Kathy's head separates from her body to fly through the air to devour newborn infants, accomplished by blue-screen TV effects and puppet strings.

As Pete Tombs would rave in *Mondo Macabro*: "*Mystics In Bali* [s]... awkwardness and shooting style give it a strange kind of authenticity. The camera hardly ever moves; most scenes are filmed in one take, using medium or close shots. In the many night sequences there are no foregrounds. The characters are isolated against the vast, empty backdrop of black space. There's a constant feeling of mystery, of tension, as though almost anything might emerge from the blackness."

One can readily laugh at *Mystics in Bali*'s many technical shortcomings. And yet... the film exerts a strange power over the viewer. Western audiences, accustomed as they are to razor sharp production values and computer generated imagery, are taken aback by the film's unshakable integrity. One gets the impression that the filmmakers genuinely believe in the subject matter.

Sometimes, sincerity is the most effective component in art. Such is the case with *Mystics In Bali*.

6, Suzzanna!

Described as "South East Asia's reigning horror diva," the films of Suzzanna (sometimes referred to as JP Suzzanna) are very enigmatic. A pretty, if plump actress who recalls Imelda Marcos crossed with Elizabeth Taylor, Suzzanna seems to have been well into middle age at the height of her hold on the box office. A lack of printed information on her adds to her mystique. Is she the wife of a producer?

Suzzanna entered moviegoers' consciousness back in 1979 with *Queen of Black Magic* (1979), which found limited domestic exploitation play as *Black Magic III*, in an attempt to associate it with the Shaw Brothers' unrelated *Black Magic* series. In a backwoods village, Suzzanna plays a woman wrongfully accused of witchcraft. Her mother is killed; her home destroyed and is driven into the jungle by the angry township. She

meets a wizard who has his own reasons for disliking the village, and the predictable magical mayhem ensues.

Suzzanna would come into her own in what one suspects is a series of films about the Snake Queen. Either an obscure South Seas or perhaps Hindu goddess, the Snake Queen is a malevolent deity who reappears with frequency in Indonesian cinema. A haughty personage, the Snake Queen dishes out harsh judgment to those who would obtain success without working for it, and dispenses some hard-won wisdom to those who survive the final reel.

The character is introduced in all her supercilious glory in *The Snake Queen* (1987). Suzzanna delivers good fortune to her followers under the provision that a human sacrifice is made in her honor within the year. The special effects are surprisingly good, perhaps showing the hands of the film's Japanese co-producers. Attended by her many chorus girl supplicants in a glittery grotto, *Snake Queen* is rich in kitschy exoticism. The opening scene where the Queen is introduced to the audience gliding through a series of psychedelic alcoves in an outrageously phony cave setting could pass muster as the Most Boring Ride in Disneyland.

Not so serious in tone is *Hungry Snake Woman* (1982), directed by *Primitives*' Sisworo Gautama. The Snake Queen this time advises a young ne'er-do-well to kill three women and dine on their breasts. The film has a bit too much fun with the character; Suzzanna beds down with a mere mortal and the circular bed swirls magically around a series of undisguised disco spotlights.

The last film to make the U.S. bootlegging rounds with Suzzanna has been *White Crocodile*, available only in the Bahasa language. *White Crocodile* is little more than outrageous gore effects on a \$1.99 budget. All the elements, such as chorus girl followers are stupid jungle explorers winding up as crocodile food, are present. *Crocodile*'s budget appears paltry. Alligator fins on the costumes of her followers are undisguised, paper-cut white cardboard. The reviewer readily admits having given up halfway on *Crocodile* with its plethora of dialogue scenes.

Fascinating in their excess, the films of Suzzanna are ripe for camp stateside discovery.

Want To Get Even!

One film that best illustrates the yawning chasm between western and eastern thoughts and attitudes is *I Want To Get Even!* (1988, aka *Violent Assassins*). The film is a weird hybrid of silent movie-style melodrama, crime and action genres. The plot is a simple one. Irma (Eva Arnaz) is the long-suffering wife of cab driver Rudy (Clift Sangra). A demure lotus blossom with beautiful features, blue eye shadow, red lips and furry armpits, she works as a cashier at a nightclub to make ends meet. The nightclub is the front for a drug and weapons smuggling operation lorded over by Sid Haig-

look-alike Cobra. Gang rape is a favored pastime of Cobra's business associates, and a trio of thugs drags Irma into the jungle for a quick one-two.

Husband Rudy, who appears to have his eyebrows and moustache drawn in with felt pen, doesn't take too kindly to the news. In spite of

Irma's first trimester pregnancy, Rudy insists the gang rape is all Irma's fault and sends her sailing out of his speeding taxicab! As the viewer can guess, their marriage is more than just a dysfunctional

"One can readily laugh at *Mystics in Bali*'s many technical shortcomings. And yet... the film exerts a strange power over the viewer."

"The abusive, monstrous husband is seen as the film's hero and the wife is expected to stand by him through hell and high water."

one. Turned out of the house, Irma seeks solace in a friend who advises her against abortion. As her friend points out, her mentally defective handicapped daughter (played by a *real* mentally defective handicapped girl – a taboo Asian cinema frequently indulges in) born under duress has grown into the light of her life. “A man is only his own pride,” Irma discovers upon reflection.

The rest of the film details the activities of Cobra’s gang and Rudy’s attempts at vengeance. Irma loses her baby in childbirth in a blood-drenched, dinner-losing scene. She figures enough is enough, and donning a Rambo-style headband and mounting a dirt bike, she trains her bazooka on the remnants of the gang before riding off with her now-wiser husband into the sunset.

The film has all the sleaze and cheese viewers have come to expect. Cast members are dressed in ugly primary colors, sometimes in T-shirts with incongruous English slogans. In a standout scene, another innocent girl is gang-raped off-screen as a gangster moll bites her thumb listening to the sounds of passion coming from the other room, her T-shirt reading “The Grand Canyon is for lovers.” *I Want To Get Even*’s attitude towards the inequity of the sexes is just astonishing. The abusive, monstrous husband is seen as the film’s hero and the wife is expected to stand by him through hell and high water.

Especially telling is director Maman Firmansjah’s first scene. Panning across a slum neighborhood over the opening credits, the camera lights upon various apartments. A montage of depravity including alcoholism, intravenous drug abuse and porno video shoots includes a shot of a young lovely opening a vein in her wrist with a razor blade and drinking her own blood. We return to the same scenes at the film’s close, which ends with a stern biblical verse.

More engaging than most serious documentaries on the subject, *I Want To Get Even* is an over-the-top exploitation feature that reveals dire situations that exist in the Third World.

Films in the cities

We will conclude our survey of Indonesian trash cinema with two atypical films that are set in urban areas. *Lady Terminator* (1988; known under countless titles such as *Nasty Hunter* and *Revenge of the South Seas Queen*) and *Dangerous Seductress* (1992) rely on the old genre staple standbys such as curses, vengeful goddesses and cut-rate special effects, but strive for a contemporary feel by setting their narratives in the relatively modern environs of modern Jakarta. Stalwart veteran H. Tjut Djaili, under his nom-de-plume “John Miller,” directed both *Terminator* and *Seductress*.

Lady Terminator is arguably the most widely known and seen Indonesian exploitation film. It enjoyed a robust release in the United States and many mom-and-pop video stores still carry copies. *Lady Terminator* also enjoyed dynamite box office in Indonesia before Suharto and his clan forcibly ended the film’s 10-day run.

Make no bones about it: *Lady Terminator* is a shameless rip-off of James Cameron and Arnold Schwarzenegger’s popular action franchise with a few stray South East Asian trappings. The film’s notoriety comes from a stilted prologue set 100 years into the past wherein the evil blonde South Sea Queen castrates her male lover for failing to satisfy her. One wily sailor is able to exorcise her malevolent spirit by coaxing a cartoon snake out of her vagina. The

execution of this one particular scene is a hoot. The malevolent spirit is represented by an optical that suggests black felt pen drawn directly on to the film’s frames. The queen utters a curse that she will live on a hundred years hence in the body of an unwilling host.

Terminator then switches to present day, with lovely brunette (Barbara Anne Constable) studying oceanography. On a boating expedition, evil forces drag her to the bottom of the ocean floor and the crude cartoon snake penetrates her. Reborn, she becomes the female incarnate of Ah-nul’t’s android destroyer. She makes her way to Jakarta and begins to decimate the city with her trusty machine gun in a body count that far exceeds the triple digits.

There is no point in defending *Lady Terminator* as anything more than blood-soaked entertainment. To the trash fan, it is little more than *Judgment Day* without a nuclear war sequence to slap the audience’s wrists for indiscriminate bloodshed. But its withdrawal from cinemas implies a deeply buried political subtext that didn’t gibe with the then regime. Indonesia is a land where the nation’s OPEC-laden wealth is very unevenly distributed. The very same shopping malls and bustling city squares used in *Terminator* were to serve as locations for widespread revolt and rioting in 1998.

The most recent Indonesian horror film to reach western eyes has been *Dangerous Seductress*, released on video in South Korea. In a story that by now writes itself, the Queen of Darkness seduces a not-very-bright young woman (the blonde, buxom and just a little bit plump Tonya Offer) into procuring playboys to satisfy her voracious blood thirst. Like all of the films mentioned here, *Seductress* is a multitude of sins masquerading a banquet of pleasures. Terrible acting, editing, special effects and photography work in the service of bringing moments that shock and amaze viewers. When the Queen of Darkness is resurrected, she is a combination of skeleton and hard body, one foot trapped in an eldritch grave. A disinterested, mangy dog comes along and gnaws on her thighbone! Jewel thieves in a speeding car eluding police yell and berate the car’s driver by repeatedly hitting him in

the face! Mystical forces suggested by laying the camera on its side and running the film backwards! What a world ...

Dangerous Seductress’ attempts at sophistication fail uproariously. An Enigma-knockoff theme song, palatial settings decorated with chintzy décor and a heroine who would fail to get past cherries on Pac Man all add to its entertainment value. It is perhaps fitting we end our survey of Indonesian horror films here, as *Dangerous Seductress* offers a summation of their appeal. They don’t make them like this any more, but it’s wonderful that films like these were still being made as late as 1992.

BQ

It’s been a long time since Greg Goodsell has made an appearance in our pages, and it’s about time he found his way back here! If you’d like to learn more about what Greg has been up to, check out his bio on our Web site at:

<http://www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/others/goodsellgreg.htm>

MZ. PAK MAN

NO MATTER HOW YOU SPELL IT, IT'S MUSICAL BRUTARIANISM!

The four ladies going by the name of Mz. Pak Man describe their music as a "Crampsy-Ramonesy kind-of-thing." You know, "your basic three-chord surf-punk garage screaming grrl band." Well, helllll-ohhhhhhhh, we beg to differ. Atonal, arrhythmic noise decorated with off-key harmonizing and quasi-Mexicali vocals is not your "basic" anything. We're not even sure the term music is an accurate description for this. Certainly, the crowd at the little D.C. club where we first heard the band didn't think so. In fact, we're not sure the audience knew what to think. Nor what they were seeing. No one applauded. No one booed or hissed. In fact, no one uttered a word until the quartet began to pack up their instruments. Then, softly at first, until it became a dull roar, the gals were saluted with chants of "Tim-meh," "Tim-meh." You may not be too impressed with this but as far as we're concerned any musical aggregate that moves their audience to imitating cartoon retards is one that has quite a future ahead of them. Maybe not a future in music; surely, though, a future in something. Agit-prop? Agent provocateur? You be the judge. Here's Abby, P.5!, LisSsa and Jenny. Ladies and gentlemen: Ms. Pac-Man... er, *Mz. Pak Man*...

Brutarian: Interesting name. You do know that you'll never be able to register it as a trademark nor use it on any of your merchandise?

P.5!: I'm optimistic since I really do love our band name and it suits us so well. Actually, I'm hoping that when we hit the big time we can work something out with Atari or Coleco or whoever the fuck owns and controls the rights to Ms. Pac-Man so that we can continue to use that name. If anything the owners should be flattered! And we're so cool and cute... How could they possibly say "No"?! Could YOU say "No" to us, Mr. Brutarian Man?

Jenny: Lawsuits are good publicity. I notice that when really stupid people sue someone over something ridiculous, it gets written up in magazines and papers. Anyway, I originally wanted to be called the Skanky Yankees but I was outvoted.

Abby: We're aware of potential problems but we don't consider it a big deal since we're not exactly aiming for main-

stream fame.

LisSsa: Besides a lot of bands alter their name if there is a dispute and still go on. Wham for instance, went to Wham UK, because they found that there was another band named Wham. Ugh! Bad example, but hey, what the hell, I'm just trying to illustrate a point.

Brutarian: The band plays in what appears to be a self-consciously primitive style. Is this intentional? Do you think this sets the band back at all? If this isn't intentional and you gals start getting better do you think this will detract from what makes Mz. Pak Man so unique at present?

Abby: We play the way we like it. Raw rock and roll!

P.5!: As far as I'm concerned none of that stuff is too important. We just love to rock out and be silly and have a lot of fun! We're not trying to be "talented" if that means being anal-retentively obsessed with technical stuff and we definitely are not interested in sounding like studio musicians! And no, I don't think our style sets us back at all. If anything, I think it's part of why we're so great! As far as getting "better" goes, I suppose evolution is inevitable... I guess only time will tell if that works for or against us.

LisSsa: I don't think we ever sat down and said, "Hey, this is going to be a primitive band, dammit!" But we know what we like and that's bands that don't sound overproduced... raw, heavy... on the garage-esque side, but with a humorous twist.

Jenny: As far as singing goes I don't have any formal training. I can hit high notes and sound all pretty and ethereal but that wouldn't really go with what we're doing.

P.5!: As far as getting better...

Jenny: ...I hope we have gotten better in the year we've been playing together [laughing]. Hopefully, the more you do something the more you improve.

Brutarian: Some of your songs appear designed to shock?

Jenny: Wait, which ones?

Brutarian: Maybe the better question is whether in this age of information overload and easy access to pornography via the internet it's even possible to shock anyone over the age of twelve?

Abby: I don't think our songs are "designed" to shock. We just sing about stuff we think is funny or relevant to our ex-

••••• BY DOM SALEMI
••••• WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM DAVID M. FITZPATRICK

periences. Like Goth boys in Florida having sex with alligators. Shock is so subjective, our songs don't shock my mother, but they may shock the sheltered teenage boy next door. Doing anything solely to shock is pretty cheesy. It does seem like almost everything has been done; it just keeps repeating a cycle. ■ For instance, Marilyn Manson isn't doing anything different from Alice Cooper, he's just offending a new generation of puritans.

P.5!: ■ Trying to shock just for shock's sake seems kinda dumb to me. Not to mention unnecessary. A lot of people I see who do stuff like that just end up looking like posers to me.

Jenny: Personally, I get more shocked by the cruel things people do in reality, not in music or art. Like those assholes in Texas who dragged that guy behind their care, that upset me more than any record I've ever listened to. also what offends people is subjective which is one of the many reasons censorship is a stupid idea.

LisSsa: And really we don't want people coming away from our shows saying, "Oh, my God, I was so shocked I couldn't sleep all week long." We want our audience to enjoy the sound of our music, and laugh with us, have a good time, enjoy the performances maybe even get a little food



for thought on the way. I don't see what's so shocking about us anyway.

Brutarian: Maybe it's the outfits and the screeching, but let's press on. You all are involved in other artistic ventures?

LisSsa: I like doing many things. I make short movies, some stop animation doll pornos. I've made three thus far: Sex Bait, Sexy Se and Gastro Glamour. I also did a clay-mation short and some movies that actually have real people (no porno in those, sorry folks! He, He.) We all did our own collaborative public access show, called, "The P.5! Show" which was an experimental variety show with live bands, video collage and purposely ridiculous skits. I mostly enjoyed being behind the camera both filming and doing the extremely primitive editing. We have been discussing bringing it back again but we all have so much we are working on at once, so unfortunately, a few projects get less attention than others. I also put together a comic-collage/zine called, "Nicemare" where my friends and I can document funny or weird experiences, visions, or ideas. I also paint cartoony type stuff, and do whatever weird artistic idea grabs me at the moment.

Jenny: I'm a cartoonist; I do a lot of drawing and painting and something called "Kronikle Komix" which is available both in zine form and, as of last year, as a weekly strip. I've also dabbled in personal writing and animation. Then there's the P.5! project which I'd love to get going again.

Abby: I write and draw my own comics like "Tough Love," "S.P.O.L.," "Rock Guys," "Night Club," "Just A Guy," "The Koi Fish," and "Jamie Starr Teen Drag Queen." A lot of that stuff has been published in "XY Magazine." My most recent project is scripting "Powerpuff Girls" comics for DC, which has been really fun! Hey Kids! Look for issues #2, #4 and #10. There's a comic I did called "Car Trouble" at gurl.com too. I also did the short movie that LisSsa mentioned, "Gastro Glamour." That was a blast! You can find



SPOTLIGHT: ABBY DENSON

MUSIC: Previously in the other all-girl punky rock bands The Libertees, The Gylrmen, and The Second Day

CARTOONS: Cartoonist; work has appeared in XY Magazine, Metroline, Third Coast, World War 3 Illustrated, Mangaphile

COMICS: Her comix include *Tough Love*, *S.P.O.L.*, *Amaterasu*, *Night Club*, *The Koi Fish*, *Rock Guys*, *Jamie Starr's Queer Bits*, and *Just a Guy*. *Car Trouble* can be found at <http://www.gurl.com/where/practicalmatters/cars/cartrouble/index.html>

WRITING: Scripts mainstream comics for Disney Adventures, Nickelodeon Magazine, and DC's *Powerpuff Girls* Comics.

VIDEO GAMES: Does art assistant work for Rodney Greenblat, the artist of the Playstation games *Parappa the Rapper* and *UmJammer Lammy*.

FILM: Made and starred in the movie *Gastro Glamour* with LisSsa.

WEB: Official site: <http://members.nbci.com/AbbyComix/> Fan site: <http://www.cryptos.co.uk/content/denson/main.html>

PERSONAL: "I love Tokyo and went to college there for a month and would like to return. I am mostly into manga and underground American comics."

more info on my website: abbycomix.com

P.5!: "Pussy" Magazine is my other main project that I completely love doing and feel really connected to. I've been in several other bands over the years and I'm a painter and a full time student studying psychology. I do all kinds of things. Whatever catches my interest. I guess you could say I'm a modern day Renaissance woman of sorts... I wanna do it all! Or at least try it all.

Brutarian: "Pussy Magazine?" "Pussy Magazine?" Are you out of your fucking mind? Aside from the gals in the band, and they've told me that, well, quite frankly they're fed up with you, do you have any girlfriends left?

P.5!: A lot of people hear the word "pussy" and instantly become put off...

Brutarian: Gee, I wonder why?

P.5!: ...thinking it's some kind of raunchy porno mag — not that there's anything wrong with those! — before even giving it a chance! However, "Pussy" is actually very positive and funny and silly and fun! The reason I call it "Pussy" is because I like the double meaning... I'm a huge cat lover and even think I may have been a sweet little purring kitty in a former life. A PUSSY cat! And I also like the connota-

tions it has to femininity and that place down there we as females are subliminally conditioned to feel ashamed of...

Brutarian: Yes, the gaping wound of the Christian Fathers... the foul-smelling fish of Vaudeville...

P.5!: "Pussy" is actually a very feminist zine although not in an angry self-righteous or militaristic man-hating way. In fact, I create "Pussy" with girls and boys in mind. "Pussy" is my answer to so-called women's magazines like "Cosmo." Everybody needs some PUSSY!

Brutarian: Speaking of that very thing, howzabout I take off...

ALL THE GALS: Now, now, calm down Mr. Brutarian Guy!

Brutarian: Oh, sorry. Let me tuck my shirt back in. Now, let's move on.

ALL THE GALS: Please, please, please...

Brutarian: Should Mz. Pak Man begin writing deep and meaningful songs, will you have to be more fully clothed? Conversely, if you discover that one of the reasons people come to see you is to stare at your semi-nekkid selves, will you start to wear less?

LisSsa: Well, we're hardly semi-naked on stage so it's hard to say. We're hardly Wendy O Williams with duct tape on

SPOTLIGHT: LISSSA DARROW-BADAWI

MUSIC: Guitar, L.A. band *Devil*; drums, *Rock Rock Chicken Pox*; bass/guitar, *Redemption Army*; guitar, /bass/keyboard/ toy instruments/ drum machines/talking dolls in solo project.

ZINE/COMICS: *Nicmare* zine in which she does collage art, writes, and takes contributions from people whose work tickles her fancy.

EVENTS: Does a club called *The Shockhead Mall* with Victoria from the band *Lionel Rocks*.

FILM: Was in *Gastro Glamour* with Abby. Also filmed stop-motion animation doll pornos (*Sex-Bait* and *Sexy Sex*) which have appeared in different art shows including *The Sick Shit Show*; claymation (*Jealous Vacation*); *Drone* with Rich Bitch; *Santa the Deliverer* with Patrick Hambrecht from *Flaming Fire*; filmed live bands and co-filmed the *Flaming Fire* video.

WEB: Did the Web site for Mz. Pak Man — <http://www.geocities.com/mzpakman>

PERSONAL: Played Dr. Magnezia in her and Abby's stomach movie *Gastro Glamour*. Has retained nickname LisSsa Magnezia since. "Jenny, Abby, and I had artwork in Danny Hellman's Cartoon Art Show at Max Fisch. P5 was there in spirit; one of my paintings I had in the show was of her! And Jenny, Abby, and I appeared recently in Fashion Designer Anna Sui's Party Movie, which was shown behind the runway of her last fashion show ... I love making and listening to music, filming, humor, dolls, rock history, kitsch, psychology and test patterns."

SPOTLIGHT: JENNY GONZALEZ



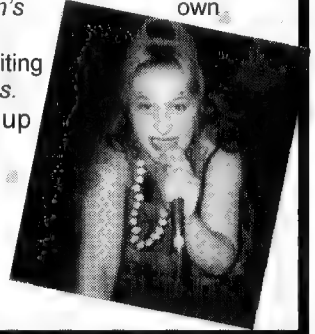
MUSIC: Mz. Pak Man is her first band. She loves the opportunity it gives her to perform physically, working knife twirling, beer gargling, and various weird contortions into a stage act. She figures it covers her complete lack of musical training.

CARTOONSCOMICS: Primary mode of expression has been as an underground cartoonist, illustrator, and animator. Had work in a few anthologies. Main project is *Kronikle Komix*, published online at ComicStore.com and in 'zine form. Done comics for Gurl.com and a two page story for *Brutarian's* own Danny Hellman (due this summer).

VIDEO/FILM: Been doing short animated films with stop motion or puppets. Got interested in editing and splicing while working on P.5!'s cable access show. Working on one with LisSsa called *Playful Chaos*.

WEB: To see *Kronikle Komix* online: http://www.thecomicstore.com/kron_arch.asp. New ones are up every Sunday, but there's an archive. *Witch Baby Devil Doll* (online zine) is at <http://www.angelfire.com/ny3/devildoll>

PERSONAL: Of *Kronikle Komix*, she says, "It's basically a lot of black-and-blue humor, satire of stuff I'm annoyed about or otherwise fascinated with. This little group of characters, they just sort put whatever's on my mind through this weird Jenny-filter and make it into something a little more out there and funny."



our nipples. I don't mind people thinking we look good but I want people to like us because they dig our music and believe us to be entertaining and fun.

P.5!: I just wear what I'm in the mood for for each show. Sometimes it's skimpy and sometimes not so. I'm not thinking too much what others think about it. I just love being a cartoon character and dressing, to me, is a whole form of artistic expression in and of itself. I love it!!

Abby: Right, getting dressed up in ridiculous outfits is part of the fun of performing. That and lots of glitter.

Jenny: Silly costumes is the operative term. Not nudity.

Brutarian: The recent Banana Republic election looks to be a return to Reaganism and with it, the return of insidious forms of censorship. We're already seeing it attempts to regulate the Internet, now we have suit against the speed metal band Slayer for damage done as a result of the content of their songs. As iconoclastic artists, are you comfortable with this or do you believe there are things we shouldn't read or hear or see? Types of things we are best not knowing?

P.5!: NO! If something bothers you just stay away!

Jenny: Absolutely not! Humans need to start remembering

how to use their brains. Censorship is a type of falsehood, where people pretend that by killing the messenger and suppressing ideas they find distasteful or dangerous, those things will go away. But those ideas will remain. Sometimes by exploring things we find distasteful, we can get to the root of them, discover why they cause the unrest, and perhaps find ways to do something about it. Everyone has a negative side - what Jung called a "shadow," and trying to repress it only makes things worse.

LisSsa: You can't always agree with everything you see being published but I'm glad to know to be made aware of it so that I can digest the information and then protect others and myself. Knowledge brings strength.

Abby: God! Don't buy it or read it. Press "stop" on the VCR or walk out of the theatre...

P.5!: Just not the one in which we're playing...

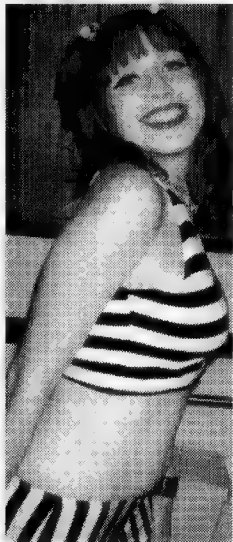
LisSsa: Well, why would anyone want to do that?

Jenny: Unless fun is a foreign concept to them...

BQ

You can learn more about Mz. Pak Man by emailing them at mzpakman@yahoo.com or visiting their Web site at: www.geocities.com/mzpakman

SPOTLIGHT: PELIN MORAWSKI



MUSIC: Drummed for bands *Caveman 2000* and *Fellini's Basement*. Found her niche with Mz. Pak Man. Fave bands and musical influences: James Brown, The Seeds, The Donnas.

ART: Painter, coined term "glitterism" to describe her own brand of pop art, surrealism, psychedelia, and collage with sparkly glitter.

ZINE: *Pussy Magazine*. For the latest issue, send four bucks to 287 Bedford Avenue #12, Brooklyn, NY 11211.

TELEVISION: Had cable access show, "The P5 Show."

WEB: Reportedly doesn't go online much.

PERSONAL: "P.5! used to be my graffiti tag. Once I got arrested and decided to give up graffiti. It stuck as a nickname/stage name... I'm a full-time student at Hunter College where I study psychology." She likes: Dying hair kooky colors; cupcakes with lots of frosting; skinny dipping; her cats; marijuana; dancing all night long; spring fever/break; white nail polish and go-go boots; surprises. "I'm supposed to be an adult but I really am still a big kid at heart!"



Yo-Yo Christians and Naked Gals with Big Toes: Thoughts on Porn

by
Paul A. Toth

How prevalent is pornography on the net? Let's just say the phrase "naked gals with big toes" currently nets some 1,800 results on the search engine Google. Certainly the internet's de-brown-bagging of porn proved to millions their objections to porn had less to do with virtue than the fear of being seen purchasing it. With major corporations like General Motors now involved in the industry (perhaps explaining why they sell a vehicle called the Hummer), the mainstreaming of porn increasingly affects everything from relationships to the power of religious institutions. The marketing of sex and nudity, truly the everyman's art form, is now beyond being ignored: Just check your e-mail.

The first thing to remember when trying to understand pornography is how misunderstood it sometimes is. Ex-felon/ex-radio host/still-bald G. Gordon Liddy once explained to a distraught caller that the best way to eliminate her husband's porn habit was to find out what he liked and perform it. That, of course, was largely wrong, because whether such activity ended in actual sex with the concerned wife or what George Costanza's mother aptly described as "treating your body like an amusement park," what the husband more than likely sought from porn *at the time* was the immediate primal blood rush of watching someone ape-naked... someone, that is, besides his wife.

It's an interest many men and not a few women share, whether married to beauties or broom riders: Looking at nudity and sex tilts the pinball machine, ringing bells like the Hunchback of Notre Dame on speed.

It can be argued porn satiates what some consider a natural predatory instinct in men... or it can be argued it encourages that instinct, sometimes to criminal extremes. It will probably remain a question each person must answer individually: Like abortion, porn brings out so many extreme viewpoints that some widespread agreement on what it is and is not, and what to do about it, is impossible. Ultimately, where you draw the line between curiosity and degradation, between harmless fun and Pee Wee Goes Jabberwocky at the Cinema Kitty, is up to you.

But it's inarguable pornography appeals to some caveman instinct. The average porn movie storyline is the narrative equivalent of cave art, of stick figures, a dot-to-dot trail to some cheesy set... often a hospital room or doctor's office, for some reason (perhaps some weird porno philosophical existentialism: See this guy in a hospital room? See what *he* does when he thinks about death? Whoa, Nelly!)

Some claim pornography "burns" its images on the brain, hard-wiring (it's impossible to avoid puns) the mind for all porn, all the

time. I was unable to locate any evidence of actual neurological damage caused by porn; chafing seems the only provable result of repeated viewing. What little "scientific evidence" of porn's aftereffects I found always tracked back to a group for or against porn.

Yet the growing number of online sites devoted to porn addiction cannot be completely ignored. There is real anguish in the often anonymous testimonials, such as the following from <http://www.victimsofpornography.org>:

"I am a long time porn addict. Having porn in my bedroom as a child, in my father's file cabinet. I am now over 48, born again for the last 20. Backslid for 10 of those, but for the most part of the last 6 years, serving HIM. 4 years ago, I also got onto the Internet, and found the easy access to porn, and found myself a yo-yo Christian. I will be praying in the morning, drowning in a perversion of thoughts in the afternoon... A grown man, unable to stop this perversion in my head. It is not like a moth to a flame, more like oxygen to a flame... I must stop. I cannot glorify GOD in this yo-yo condition."

Like the confessions of a tortured saint, such testimonials prove at least one thing: The utter hold sexual images have over the mind – even the minds of those who have devoted their lives to *not having sexual images in their minds*.

Of course, these same sites make plenty of less than believable claims, such as the highly disputable notion that pornography leads to sex crime. While it may be true that some criminals (most famously Ted Bundy) do claim pornography contributed to their pathology, the very prevalence of porn argues against this theory: With naked pictures the most popular candy on the net, the graph of sex crime over the past few years should have spiked like a plucked guitar string. But the Department of Justice National Crime Survey notes that from "1997 to 1998 no significant changes in rates of rape or sexual assault, robbery, or simple assault occurred."

Yet the following statistics (from www.websense.com, a corporate management site – so this is what the guy with the goofy tie in the back cubicle does all day) would cause one to expect that guitar string statistic of sex crime to not only be plucked, but snapped:

- Workers spend an average of 21 hours online at the office vs. an average of 9.5 hours at home (Nielsen/Net Ratings).
- 70% of all Internet porn traffic occurs during the 9-to-5 work-day (SexTracker).
- One in five men and one in eight women admitted using their work computers as their primary lifeline to access sexually

explicit material online (MSNBC).

Talk about jacking off on the job... obviously, our instincts are rather unwieldy, so much so that even the knowledge that the guy who orders Post-Its and mouse pads may take a gander at our computer cookies stops few from sex surfing on the job (I actually know someone who knows someone who was fired when his employer caught him "fumbling the football" on the clock).

Yet these horny office workers somehow manage to accomplish whatever meager goals their jobs require and make it all the way home on the subway without groping the John Grisham reader in the next seat. (However, word to Dilbert: Bill Gates really, really wants to know where your little fingers take you in the neon infoworld, because if you're running Windows, you leave more fingerprints than a kleptomaniac Octopus. Go ahead, take a look in all your Windows temp files, perv.)

Perhaps the strangest result of all this porning will be the categorization of desire, the absolute specifying of lust, down to color, fabric, microbe, until the very metal of our sexual triggers has been analyzed, identified and satisfied: Not only does the gentleman prefer blondes, but blondes with a natural tan, thin and tall, sitting on a red Porsche in the hot summer heat in the middle of the desert in Nevada, with green eyes, with slender fingers, with...

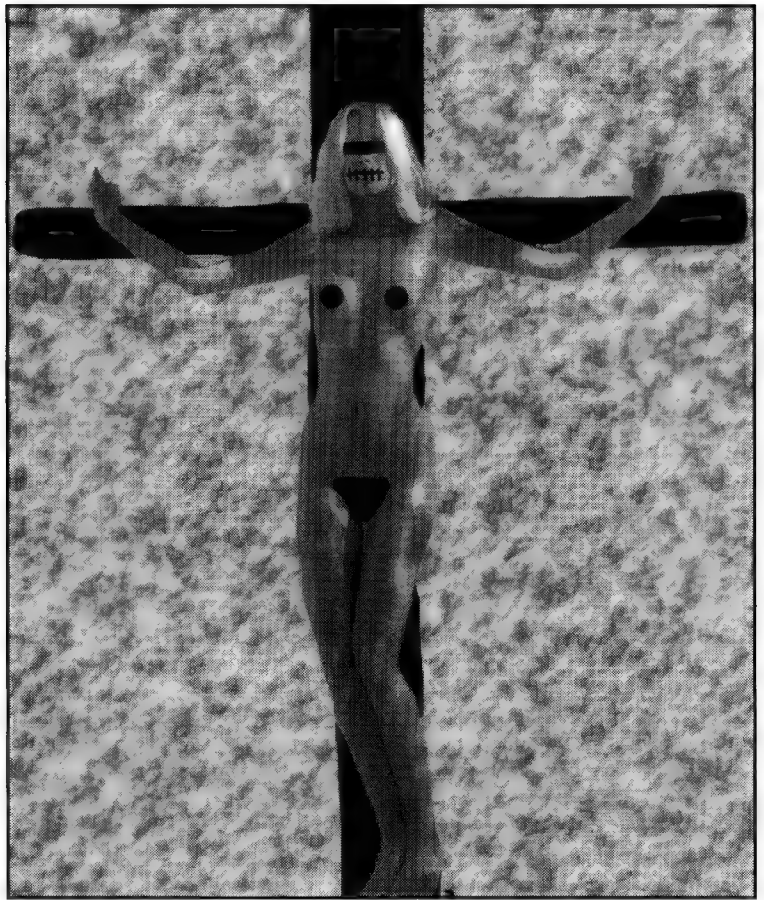
There's a definite fetishizing in this pursuit of image, a need for something this, not that. Like shopping. And so, yes, it's beyond debate there is something very objectifying about pornography, something that makes the "models" more like automobiles, sought by obsessives, by collectors and enthusiasts, by people heading towards nutdom, like *Star Trek* conference attendees, spending their lives, spending their hormones, on pixels, on JPEGs and MPEGs... on illusion. It's almost sad until it becomes scary, because in the ultimate safe sex world, pornography and masturbation could easily take the place of sex, and all babies will be born of jars. We will be the Campbell's Soup of species: Processed, inspected, approved. Next!

In such a world, people who dare actually invade one another's bodies will be considered sickos, next to necrophiliacs. You can already hear the teenagers: "Ewwwwwww." Biology will be utterly subverted, its calling card arousal techniques appropriated as magic, as parlor tricks. Like dogs chasing a "stick" its owner "threw," we will happily chase after illusion, sprinting under the sun, sort of knowing deep down there really is no stick but playing along because there is no stick and it's better than nothing. After all, once upon a time masturbation was better than nothing, but now it's considered a "safe sex technique." What's next, a production of Hamlet with the scene-stealing line, "To be or not to be... whatever works is okay with me - I don't want no trouble"?

Does it come down to dimensions? That three dimensions equals the possibility of rejection, humiliation or, at the very least, bad sex followed by a morning of nausea and regret... whereas the two dimensional world of porn equals a few minutes of flipper-flapper followed by "maybe I'll check my e-mail"? Is it all about, as George Clinton (not Bill Clinton, although he *should* have been the one to say it) says, the angle of the dangle? Geometry, trigonometry? Are we becoming abstract art, disintegrating into mega, kilo, gigabytes?

Hold on. Let's not be carried away. None of these riotous results ever happen. Never the constitutional crisis, the Third World War. Don't listen to George Will. Don't, in general, trust any man who exclusively wears bowties: There's something wrong. It's a sign, a signal.

Do, however, consider - because it's worth considering - whatever your moral stripe: What is to become of a race of jacker-offers? What will the aliens, when they finally arrive, think? Will they peal out across the universe? Can you imagine finding your dog in the john with a magazine full of spread-pawed dogs? And what about the children? If they really are the future - as everyone insists they are - will they be blind, hair-palmed, hand permanently shaped in the form of a mouse? Clicking when they pass the opposite sex at the mall, as if tapping an imaginary button will cause a piece of clothing to drop? Aren't the baggy pants, the strip of exposed box-



ers bad enough?

Will porn become so accepted, so mainstream, that taking a job blowing X-Files fans becomes as or even more acceptable than making \$6.95 rolling various meat, tomatoes, cheese, lettuce and sour cream into various meat, tomatoes, cheese, lettuce and sour cream holding devices? Will there one day be a pipe smoking dad of concern welcoming his daughter: "How'd your first day go at the Whore-a-Lot, honey?"

Maybe. Yet when that day comes, these same youngsters will still attend church, watch football and join the Army. Except for plundering their hormones like oil wells, salt mines, they will be utterly like every other generation; even Tom Brokaw's Greatest Generation. The only difference being a willingness to be filmed, photographed, Xeroxed, mimeographed, drawn, MRI'd, EKG'd in all manner of sexual acts.

Or they will do a moral turnabout, shunning the pervert world of their parents. They will become far-right Christians. They will find Jesus. They will shun sex. They will marry boys and girls who look like their parents. They will happily wear goofy ties. And take the place of the guy in the back cubicle with the secret job description.

Or not.

Because the question of whether this trend will liberate us from the repressive morality of the Howdy Doody haircut set, or turn us into Bob Crane I-used-to-play-Colonel Hogan-but-now-I'm-laying-here-murdered, depends largely on what you want to believe.

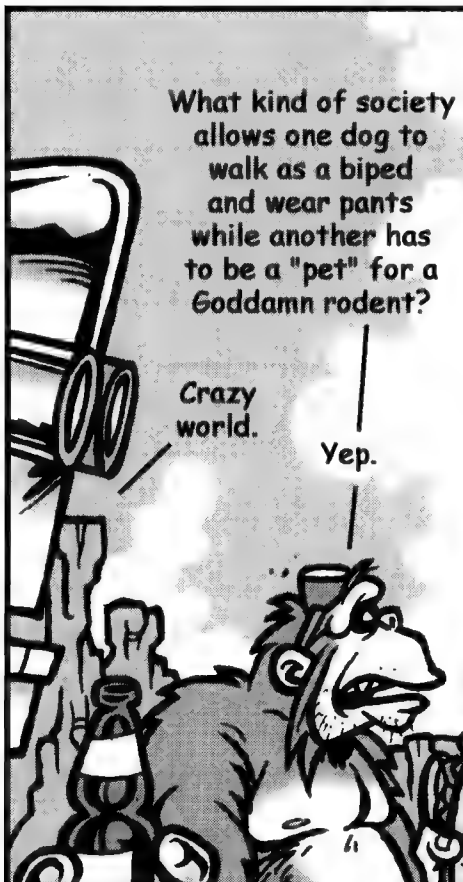
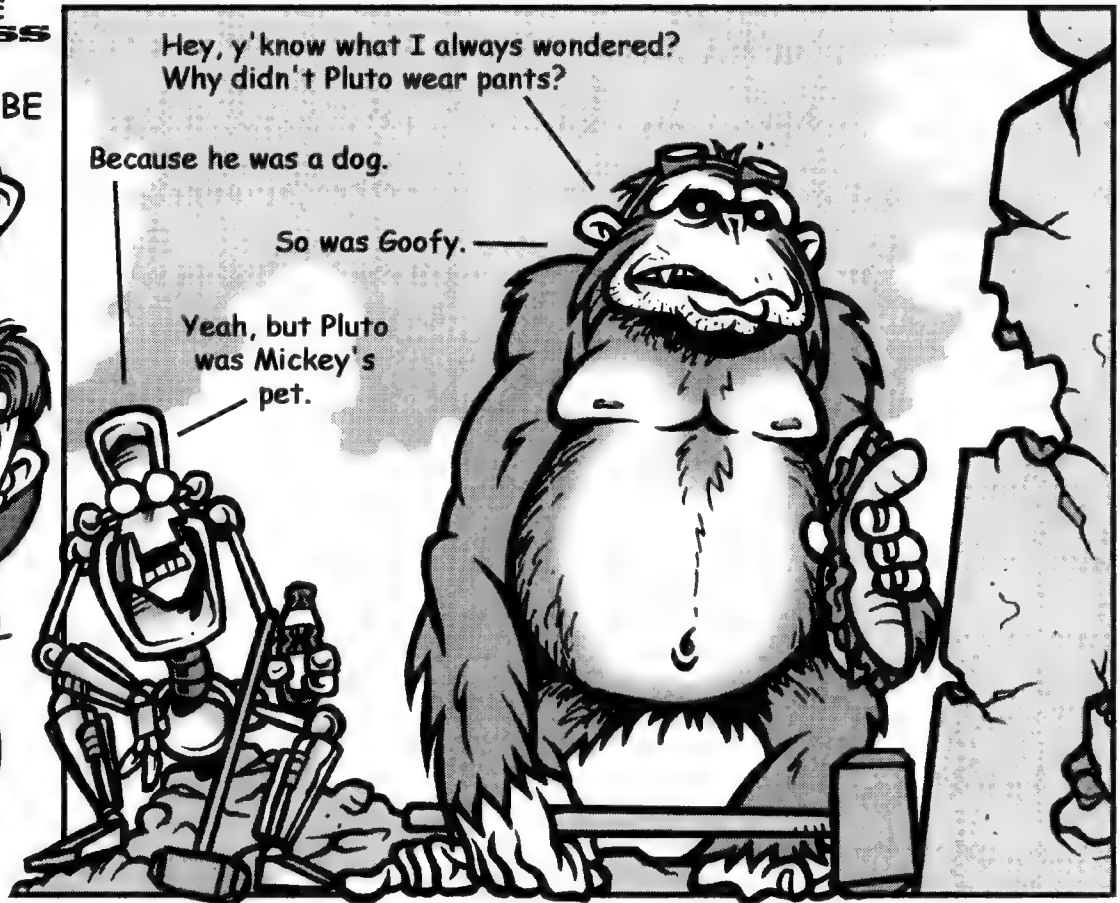
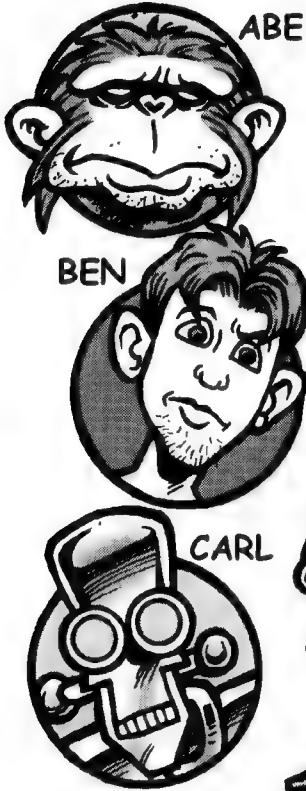
BQ

Paul A. Toth is a talented writer who recently appeared in our pages in Issue #31. To learn more about that feature story, visit Paul's bio page on our site at:

<http://www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/others/tothpaula.htm>

THE THINKING APE BLUES by Mark Poutenis

STARRING THE
PROGRESS
BROS.



—END—



Rat Stew means cooking what you can catch, so we'll boil down whatever's in the pot.

This month's catch: Horror, and those who knew it counted before King Stephen crowned it a genre distinct and apart. Hell, before it became lucrative and even moribund.

Here's how it was:

Horror movies are what stirred us toward Samhain's annual boil, but its books kept us simmering year 'round. Karloff, Lugosi, Lorre, Price, Chaney *pere et fils*, reminded us how much it mattered to catch glimpses of these old frights once a year. We saved up our appreciation to savor the brief Halloween run, when images we'd thought about for ages came to life to scamper, usually late at night, across one of three snowy channels.

Remember getting up to wiggle the coat-hanger to improve reception? Remember when every truck that drove by splashed your screen with snow? Remember draping aluminum foil all over the antenna, or running up to the attic and forming a yell-line to adjust

reception by turning the antenna?

Or how about those Aurora Movie Monster Models? Frankenstein's monster stiff armed, Dracula near his grave, and the Wolfman howling by a dead tree. Some came with glow-in-the-dark parts, too. Enthralling for the readers among us, who kept horror's flame alive, nursing it on short story deadfall and the occasional fallen trunk of novel.

We sought out Robert Louis Stevenson, Bram Stoker, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, and Gaston Leroux. Those cornerstones set up a foundation for Poe, Lovecraft, and Bloch. We cared for them as we scoured Alfred Hitchcock Presents anthologies and used book stores for more names, more of the stuff we needed for our fix. We remembered them as we graduated to subtlety with Shirley Jackson, Algernon Blackwood, and M. R. James.

And once a year all this nurturing of the genre sparked to life when a chance to see a horror movie loomed. Horror movies mattered. They used to be rare and special, something to savor and meditate upon.

Kids who missed them sought out those who'd seen, and the images and key scenes were passed along, a children's arcane oral history of shivers, shudders, and shunned ideas.

Yes, those who knew read horror year round. Coveted anthologies with rare names — Dunsany, Lovecraft, Blackwood, Machen, Oliver Onions — offered sharp tastes of vintages aged in secrecy and distributed begrudgingly only to those who knew things. Long before Clive Barker, James Herbert, or Michael Slade, those who read kept alive the flame that flared to conflagration once a year as, with *All Hollow's Eve*, the horror movies returned like a dark flock of flickering revelations.

Though the cognoscenti read year round, it was only when the horror movies swarmed once more that their reading became admissible in conversation. Movies allowed some open talk, some shared enthusiasm to focus, for a brief season of chilled wind and swirling leaves, on what at any other time would be corralled and branded weird, kept off shelves and off-limits from polite society, and denied a rightful place when awards flew towards greedy outstretched ink-stained hands.

The few horror stories honored in any way got Poe Awards and were called variant mystery stories.

Horror, some of us knew, mattered somehow in ways that made the regular

people uncomfortable.

Reading deepened the experience but movies packed the wallop. That's why horror movies are just what's needed to spark the flame in our jack-o-lantern smiles. Wes Craven and David Cronenberg understand, and their movies leap past old Hammer Films into new territory. They knock sense back into us, remind us what it's like being a little kid under the swaying card table Mom has draped with a blanket, inside a dark place all snug and cozy in flannel PJ's but enticed, compelled to peer out from under that familiar blanket for a glimpse of Hitchcock's *The Birds* as they hunt and peck their way into our nightmares.

Our sound of one hand clapping is the smile in the theater's darkness, the other hand clutched by a friend — is she *Rosemary's Baby* or *Damien*, spawn of Hell? — who's sharing more than popcorn with us in the thrill of the moment. Back then George Romero's zombies munched innocent people like so many caterpillars, and we smiled, knowing our vigil had not been in vain.

And then horror became a market niche, and a genre, and a frenzy of imitation glutted the market, until inevitably the bubble burst and horror started wearing a mask called Dark Fantasy and the genre fell in upon itself, going back to being just a flavor, an added spice to other more stable genres such as suspense, or mystery, or fantasy, or even science fiction.

Through it all those of us who understand keep reading, knowing it's the only way of getting by until the next Thomas Harris or the next *Scream* trilogy comes up behind us and say, "Boo."

What to read: Try *Wetbones* by John Shirley, or his short story collection *Black Butterflies*. Either way you'll find an uncompromising, prescient horror writer at the top of his form. He writes with anger, passion, and intelligence, and balances the whole act with prose both blunt and sharp at the same time. His work takes no prisoners and gives no quarter; squeamish readers keep away, prudes avert gazes, and bluenose moralizers go straight to hell.

Both are available again from Leisure Books in paperbacks that could stand some copyediting. Good thing the material soars so high above the indifferent presentation. Shirley deserves way better, and eventually our spavined sub-reality will wake up to that flat-out fact. Meanwhile, read what you can get, as we who know have always done.

Catch you next time.

BQ

Gene Stewart, the Paladin Prince of Paranoia, is a regular contributor. This column will soon be seen regularly on our Web site. To learn more about Gene, visit his bio page on our site at:

<http://www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/stewartgene.htm>



Bob Mosley

A Two-Part Interview

Introduction by John Oliver

Part One by Ernesto de Pascale

Part Two by John Oliver

This is a two part interview — the first being the transcript of an Italian television show interview with Connie & Bob Mosley, conducted by the esteemed Ernesto de Pascale in late 1999, and the second an interview with Bob by John Oliver in March 2001.

First, we are honored and delighted to be able to share this short made-for-Italian-television interview with Bob Mosley, bassist/singer/songwriter extraordinaire of Moby Grape, and his new bride, Connie Bonner Mosley, longtime member of the Grateful Dead family, conducted by Ernesto de Pascale at their Petaluma, California home in 1999. First, a little background on the principals — the interviewer and interviewees:

Ernesto — In Ernesto de Pascale's 43 years, he has been a disc jockey, radio program director, professional musician, radio and television consultant, writer of several books (a Bessie Smith biography, and several books devoted to the Italian music scene, the most recent covering Italian Rock & Roll in the early 60's) and short story compilations, music journalist (published in most major European music magazines), record producer, screenwriter, composer of film scores, music festival coordinator, and part-time actor in films and on television — a true Renaissance man of music and the entertainment field if ever there's been one. He is one of the leading voices in Italy in the promotion of rhythm & blues, rock & roll, and blues music. In addition, Ernesto also runs the "Il Popolo del Blues" entertainment show and its supporting web site (check it out for more information on this man!). Oh, and I must mention, he's also one Hell of a nice guy! As part of some recent television shows he produced, he had the good fortune to interview many of the key figures in the San Francisco music scene of the 60's — among them Carlos Santana, Sam Andrew (Big Brother & The Holding Company), and Bob Mosley of Moby Grape — for a series he was doing on the Monterey Pop Festival of 1967 and its influence on the music world. Through some communications we shared via the Moby Grape and Flamin' Groovies eGroups, I managed to talk Ernesto into letting *Brutarian* publish his Mosley interview. Hopefully, this will be the first of many such collaborations!

Connie & Bob — Very few rock & roll bands ever arrived on the scene with the publicity and hype of Moby Grape in 1967 in San Francisco... and even fewer were really deserving of this degree of hype, but... if ever a band *did* deserve it, it was the Grape. Five strong singers, four sources of excel-

lent songs (and all five wrote; Miller/Stevenson as a team), incredibly talented musicians... they had it all, including a true desert island disk in their '67 Columbia debut, "Moby Grape," arguably the best debut R&R album ever. Volumes have been written elsewhere about their management problems (which continue to this day, in the form of various lawsuits over still unsettled-issues, 30+ years later), individual band members' personal demons and problems, and the way that the huge success they richly deserved somehow eluded them. We don't want to resurrect or rehash any of these old subjects here, however... we want to talk music. Ultimately, the band has never really broken up, most recently playing in late 1998/early 1999, and they still possess a certain magical chemistry whenever multiple band members show up and start playing together. At the '98/'99 shows, original members Jerry Miller (guitar, vocals), Peter Lewis (guitar, vocals), and Bob Mosley (bass, vocals) were on-board, along with Big Brother guitarist Sam Andrew and Sons of Champlin drummer James Preston... and they sounded great!

Of the amazing array of talent within the band throughout its history, Bob Mosley's singing, bass playing and songwriting have clearly been three of the cornerstones and highlights. He has always been a powerful, soulful singer, with a voice seemingly more suited to rhythm & blues shouting and ballad crooning than R&R. As witnessed both live and on record, he is also a superb backing vocalist, fitting right in the middle of the Grape's unparalleled harmonies (with Skip Spence and Don Stevenson's higher voices, and Jerry Miller's and Peter Lewis' lower parts... and I may not have that mix 100% right, with my untrained ear). As a bassist, he's always been right up there with other noted SF practitioners of the instrument, such as Jack Casady and Phil Lesh. As a songwriter, he's been responsible for some of the Grape's best loved songs ("Bitter Wind", "Mr. Blues", "Come In The Morning", "It's a Beautiful Day Today", "Gypsy Wedding", "Never", "Truckin' Man", "Hoochie", etc.).

A native of Southern California, Bob played bass and sang in a variety of bands (notably The Misfits — no relation to the New Jersey ghouls — and The Frantics, along with future Grapers Jerry Miller and Don Stevenson) prior to forming Moby Grape in 1966. He was with the band through their first 3 LP's — the eponymous legendary debut, the disappointing but ultimately underrated "Wow", and a return to form with "Moby Grape '69" — before quitting to join the Marines (but see comments below). After a short-lived stint in the military,

he rejoined the band for their first comeback LP, "20 Granite Creek" in 1970, then left again for a solo career, which included his 1972 Reprise/Warner Bros. LP, "Bob Mosley" (STILL not available on CD, dammit! — but see comments below). We next heard again from Bob in the band Fine Wine, a collaboration with Grape guitarist Jerry Miller and Michael Been, later of The Call. They put out one outstanding LP on Polydor in 1976 that, unfortunately, wasn't released in this country — hence, little sales.

In the late 70's, Bob played in a variety of bands, gigging wherever he could. The one everyone wants to talk to Bob about, The Ducks, a collaboration with Neil Young, unfortunately only lasted several months, and never recorded. In 1983, Moby Grape resurfaced, in the form of an LP titled "Moby Grape", but known to fans as the "heart album", due to its psychedelic cover art. It was essentially a platform for Bob and Peter Lewis, with Jerry Miller and Don Stevenson only appearing on a couple of cuts. Some great singing and very good songs, but the band never went on the road to support or promote it. We next heard from Bob on record (actually, just a few of us heard him!) with a very limited edition EP called "Wine and Roses" in 1986, a low-key acoustic collection of tunes he had penned. He resurfaced again with what appeared to be solo album in "Mosley Grape — Live At Indigo Ranch", an odd release that featured some decent songs, but sub-par singing for Bob (again, see comments below on this... all is revealed!).

In 1990, the band resurfaced again, to make what, for most fans, was a major statement in the cassette-release only "The Melvilles", comprised mainly of new Bob Mosley and Jerry Miller compositions (along with the incredible Skip Spence composition "All My Life (I Love You)").

(NOTE: The Grape-like names "Fine Wine" and "Melvilles" were necessitated by the still-ongoing-to-this-day fight with their ex-manager over who owns the name "Moby Grape." Favorably reviewed in Rolling Stone, this was yet another case of a superb, yet under-released — and, for the

most part, unheard — recording by the band.)

A more widely circulated release, the superb "Vintage" double CD set of the Grape, which covers their first 4 CD's (through late 1969's "Truly Fine Citizen", recorded sans Bob Mosley), was released in 1993. While Peter Lewis and Jerry Miller released excellent solo CD's during the mid-90's, and Skip Spence's quirky masterpiece "Oar" from '69 was re-released, nothing else was heard out of the other members until a "new" Bob Mosley CD surfaced during 1999, in the form of "Never Dreamed" on the German-based Taxim label.



During the late 70's, one J.P. Whitecloud, a songwriter who had worked with Waylon Jennings, wrote some songs originally intended to be shopped around, with his own demo vocals on them. While J.P. confesses he's not much of a singer, the backing tracks for these songs were done by a combination of Buddy Holly's old band The Crickets (Sonny Curtis, J.I. Allison), and what was left from Elvis Presley's last band (the legendary James Burton on guitar, Glen Hardin on keyboards, Joe Osborne on bass). Living in San Diego at the time (as was Mr. Mosley), Whitecloud managed to hook up with Bob and get him to lay down vocals over the tracks — leaving us with a combo of the Crickets, Elvis' band, plus Bob Mosley! Bob's singing is great, and the fact that some of the songs are also good is icing on the cake. On the Grape web site, Bob mentions that he has some other

solo material and new songs recorded, which he hopes to release soon. See comments in Part two below.

From a live standpoint, the band started playing together again in late 1996, with the original 3 members mentioned above. They played several gigs in 1996, 1997 (notably two shows at Wetlands in NYC in August, favorably reviewed in Rolling Stone), 1998 (including two more nights at Wetlands in November), and 1999, with their most recent show being a gig at the Whiskey-A-Go-Go show in LA in February of that year. Sadly, with Skip Spence's passing that same year,

we'll never again hear the 5 originals together. Thankfully, we still have Bob, Jerry, Peter and Don with us... and at least 3 of them are still making music.

Connie Bonner Mosley has known Bob for about 35 years, since the earliest days of Moby Grape in San Francisco. She went to school with various members of the Grateful Dead, and she has been a member of the Dead family for decades, from selling or taking tickets to their shows back in the mid-60's, to still working for them to this day, in merchandizing, selling Dick's Picks CD's, etc. She's also an active participant in various web-based eGroups for 60's bands — I met her through the Moby Grape group (as well as Ernesto). I couldn't really get much more in the way of biographical info from Connie — "Bob's the one you want to talk with, he's the one in the band!" I thank you, Connie, for all your help in putting this article together. Connie's in the Part One interview, but was at work during the Part Two conversation I had with Bob.

On with the interviews...

Part One

Ernesto de Pascale (EDP): The Monterey Pop Festival (of 1967) was the first international sign of something happening in San Francisco. It was really the first time the World knew about it, but there had obviously been a scene going on there for a year or two prior to the Festival; perhaps a simpler scene, not so complex?

Bob Mosley (BM): Yeah, for \$3 you could see three acts back then, and we're talking like Big Brother, Quicksilver Messenger Service, the Grateful Dead... you could see Moby Grape, the Sons of Champlin, the Charlatans. Otis Redding came to town, it cost \$3 to see him. In those days, you had like 200

people or so, paying \$3 a head... the band would get \$60 to split. We made money playing the weekends there at the Avalon, Fillmore, the Ark, the Matrix... all these places were available in San Francisco for the musicians and the fans. It was a small scene that grew and grew until the Monterey Festival — where a lot of people showed up to watch the same acts that had been playing in San Francisco. Connie and I were both there to see it all happen at Monterey.

EDP: After the Festival, did you get the impression that the scene was getting a lot bigger?

BM: After Monterey, the record companies got involved, and every band got a record contract, which is what we were all shooting for. Janis Joplin and Big Brother's album came out the same time as our debut, and they went on to play the bigger venues, the stadiums. In Boston, we played with The Mamas and The Papas and Big Brother — it was the most people I'd ever seen in one place, just to see one show...and that was coming from the \$3 a night shows. We were making like \$6,000 a night, split five ways for those bigger shows, and then we'd come home and see the same people at the Fillmore and Avalon. It just kept going, and places like the Fillmore are still open to this day. What's it cost now, \$10? (laughs)

Connie Bonner Mosley (CM): We should be so lucky! For me, I was about 17 or 18 at the time (Monterey Festival), and a rumor had spread that The Beatles would be showing up at Monterey, probably in disguise. That made it a much bigger picture in my mind, that the scene had spread well out of just our community if The Beatles were aware of it. Seeing Brian Jones (Rolling Stones) walking through the crowd there...all of a sudden it wasn't just our neighbors down the street who we knew - there were many new faces. But it was really the Human Be-In in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco that was the first big hint to me about just how big this music scene was getting. The Polo Fields at Golden Gate

Park were just packed with people from all over the Bay Area, all music fans.

EDP: And this occurred in...?

CM: It was in '67, and I forget whether it happened right before or right after Monterey... but that event had the biggest impact on me, as far as making me aware of how large the scene was getting.

EDP: The bands and the audience shared the same space, the same ground?

BM: That's true. They'd be sitting on the floor, there were no seats... and they'd come up and personally thank-you after playing for them.

CM: There were never any chairs at the Fillmore or Avalon... and I remember when we got to Monterey and saw all these folding chairs and aisles, and we said "that's not OK", because wherever the Dead played (including Monterey), they always wanted any chairs or seats to be removed or folded, so the people could dance.

BM: Personally, when I was on stage, I just remember people sitting on the floor... but Connie was always trying to get people up and dancing.

EDP: Bob, who better than you can describe what happened to Moby Grape?

BM: Well, we were victims of a survival thing that was happening within the music industry — the way the industry manipulates bands, how they pay them... it was very harsh sometimes, dealing with our record company (CBS). We tried to get away from our manager. CBS just didn't want to deal with us because it was almost impossible dealing with that guy... and it's still going on to this day. (Ed. Note: There are still lawsuits and litigation pending involving the band members and their former manager, almost 35 years later.) Some other bands who didn't have those kinds of problems back then, like the Grateful Dead, wound up with their own problems later... so everybody had a chance to get ripped off at one point or another. It was very strange - on the surface, there's supposedly all this love emanating from the music

scene, while there are certain individuals who are taking advantage of every possible situation financially in the background. There's no money being paid to the musicians, at least not enough to live on. It just lost a lot of its luster for me, watching what was going on in the music industry. And Moby Grape had a great first album (Ed. Note: True!!!), it's right up there with Sgt. Pepper's or anything Janis Joplin did. We just got clocked right out of the picture. And we weren't these naive, geeky guys who were playing rock & roll just so we could meet the Beatles! (laughs) We were a working band who played and traveled all over the East coast, trying to make it. The Dead wanted to play there, and Janis Joplin really made it big there. But by and large, none of the San Francisco bands really made it big until the 70's, doing the really big shows for the big money. And that never happened for me. It was either the studio or the \$3 shows that I remember best. Connie used to take tickets at the Carousel, and I'd come by and say "hi." She was a part of the Grateful Dead entourage, she went to school with all of those guys. I loved that group! There was a certain innocence going on with them, and none of the industry problems... they happened later for them.

EDP: Connie, were you a fan of Moby Grape?

CM: I was a huge fan, and we were all friends. I went with them to LA when they recorded their first album. I couldn't stay the whole time, because I was taking care of the first Grateful Dead Fan club, which was just starting up then and struggling along. But I watched them record a lot of that album, and yes, I was a huge fan!

EDP: So you've followed the band throughout their story?

CM: Yes, I've always followed the band, but as a fan and a friend, not an employee... and I also fell madly in love with this man!

BM: Madly in love, yeah (laughs)

EDP: At a certain point, the San Francisco scene got bigger and bigger than just the music, with

all the people moving to the Haight/Ashbury, and...

CM: We moved then!

EDP: Brava! That's what I was going to ask you about... at a certain point, you had to say "I've seen the funeral of the hippies, and the place is now overrun with tourists, and..." ... how did you cope?

CM: Well, it was not difficult, as we didn't live with it for very long. There are many well-documented stories by (Grateful Dead) band members about the tour buses going past our house. We moved to Marin County to get away. I don't know what Moby Grape were doing then, they may have been in New York, recording "Wow" (2nd album), but those of us remaining in Haight/Ashbury, we moved.

EDP: Do you have a feeling about today's music, about something similar happening?

CM: You mean today's bands? I'm sure there's something similar going on, although it's not nearly as easy or affordable for bands to live together as it was in the 60's... but there a lot of good young bands out there, and I think they're really doing things a lot differently than the way our generation and our predecessors did. The music business, for example, is changing for the better, I think, with the internet. Maybe there will be no record companies at some point, at least not in the old traditional sense!

EDP: The Dead is a good example for a new generation of artists?

CM: Well, the Grateful Dead has always tried to stay on the cutting edge.

EDP: Bob, how has Moby Grape managed to stay together? Because in spite of all of your problems, they've never really split up in the traditional sense.

BM: We just hang in there. Every decade, we seem to get a record contract, or we're asked to go out on the road with a group including at least some of the original Grape members. My first temporary split from the band was in late 1969, when Peter (Lewis) asked me to go to Nashville with the band to record what turned out to be "Truly Fine

Citizen" (4th album). I didn't go, and I went out and joined the Marine Corps. I had become very disillusioned with the music business, Janis Joplin had died, Jim Morrison had died, and a lot of people I had counted on had died or quit from the music industry.

CM: When did you do then solo LP ("Bob Mosley" on Warner Bros./Reprise)?

BM: That was in 1971... and that was the first record that actually made me some money, and paved the way for the future for quite awhile.

EDP: Any suggestions you have for young musicians, Bob?

BM: Yes, stay together and be friends. If and when that becomes no longer possible, you're better off if you quit and get another band... because it's not worth the head problems, the arguments, the sad and hurt feelings, and the aggravation. You first get into the music because it's fun. When it stops being fun, it's best to make a change.

EDP: Connie, your suggestion.

CM: Take care of your own business, hang onto your masters and publishing rights. This is not a mystery to musicians nowadays, because of the internet and the long, documented history of record companies and others taking advantage of music and songwriters. Hang onto and protect your work.

EDP: I think Italians have a more bohemian view on this kind of thing, but your points are very important. I hope that young musicians watching this show listen to you... it's good to hear this kind of thing from someone who has been there and gone through what you have. I thank you two very much for allowing me to talk with you.

CM/BM: Thank you, Ernesto!

Part Two

BRUTARIAN: Hey Bob, let me start out by congratulating you on your fairly recent marriage to Connie!

BM: Thanks.

BRUT: From watching the

Ernesto interview tape, it sounds like you two go back about 35 years or so. Did you ever imagine that the two of you would end up together like this?

BM: No...and we were friends back then, but we've both gone through a lot of changes over the years. I remember she got hustled by a guy in LA one time while hitch hiking, and had to get flown back by Skip Spence. She was working for the Grateful Dead then, and she was about 17 years old back then, but I had a rule...

BRUT: Were you much older?

BM: I was 23 at the time.

BRUT: What exactly does Connie do within the Grateful Dead organization now?

BM: Well, she does the merchandising. For example, she takes orders for the Dick's Picks CD's.

BRUT: Yeah, they've still got literally thousands of old tapes of live shows there that they're putting out little by little.

BM: They've got a big vault of tapes. Dick (Latvala), the guy who was keeping them, passed away last year, but... yeah, they could keep putting out those tapes forever, it seems.

BRUT: Your band, Moby Grape: my initial exposure to them was when I fell for the immense hype and bought the first LP on Columbia the week it came out. I was totally blown away, and have been ever since.

BM: That was a great album, and a fun one to record.

BRUT: I first saw you guys live at the old Ambassador Theater in Washington, DC in November or December, 1967; a great live show! The next time I saw you was in a cow pasture known as the Pozo Saloon, near Santa Margarita, California, in October of 1997 — almost 30 years later!

BM: Yes, I remember that show.

BRUT: It seems like you guys were having trouble hearing each other on stage. You started with "Fall On You", except the drummer was playing something else, it sounded like.

BM: We had trouble with the PA system that day. The band right before us had it set up pretty well, but my mike, and Jerry's and Peter's were all

down, and we weren't able to do a sound check. We were basically doing a sound check as we went along, adjusting the sound levels. It's sometimes tough to do.

BRUT: I remember you and Jerry and Sam (Andrew) signaling to the soundboard man throughout the set.

BM: Yeah, if I recall, Sam was really upset.

BRUT: The next time I saw you guys was at the Wetlands (NYC) shows in November 1998, and I thought you guys sounded phenomenal both nights.

BM: Good! We really enjoyed doing those gigs. It was a 5 hour flight up to New York, and we got there and went shopping and walked around, and went to dinner. Things have changed so much since the last time we were there. The whole crowd scene was gone... there are still a lot of people there, of course, but not the crowds everywhere we used to see. From '67 to '97 is so different!

BRUT: When was the last time you guys had been there, prior to the Wetlands gigs... and you played Wetlands in '97, as well as '98?

BM: 1968 was the last time we were there.

BRUT: Really? That would have been what, about the time you were recording "Wow"?

BM: Yeah.

BRUT: I noticed you also played later gigs on New Years Eve (1998/1999) at Santa Rosa, California, and in LA at the Whiskey-A-Go-Go early in '99.

BM: That was in February 1999.

BRUT: A question that I'm sure all your fans want to know. You mentioned in the Ernesto interview that, at least once a decade, Moby Grape regroups in some form and goes out on the road. Well, it's a new decade now... any gigs on the horizon?

BM: We're heading to San Diego in June to play at the Starlight Amphitheater, with Jefferson Starship, the Strawberry Alarm Clock, and Big Brother and the Holding Company.

BRUT: Wow! When is this show?

BM: It's on June 16th. That'll be

a good show.

BRUT: I've also read on the Moby Grape eGroup postings that you have occasionally sat in with Jerry Miller's band, Dai Bando.

BM: Yes, I was up there in Tacoma, Washington, with Jerry for awhile, but I don't like the weather up there. It was overcast and raining the whole time, it seemed like. I'm from Southern California and I like the weather a lot warmer than they have up there.

BRUT: I also read on the band's official website (*ED. NOTE: www.realgrape.com, as of this writing, although the ownership of this website is also being litigated!*), under your individual page that you have some solo material sitting in the can, waiting to be released. What's the status on this?

BM: Starting from the time I moved here in '97, I've been going into the studio and working for the past 3 years on new songs. I've got Sam (Andrew) playing on some tracks, I've got a couple other guys who played with me. I got the tapes to the point where I put them in J.P. Whitecloud's hands (producer of "Never Dreamed").

BRUT: He's going to mix them or produce them further?

BM: He's going to get James Burton to play guitar on some of the cuts, and he's got a drummer - it won't be J.I. Allison (of Buddy Holly & The Crickets) this time, because he's not feeling well. So he's going to add some more guitars and drums, and I think it'll work out fine. His wife just had a triple bypass recently, so he hasn't been able to work on the tapes yet.

BRUT: It sounds like he's going to do the exact opposite this time of what he did on "Never Dreamed", where he had the backing tracks with Burton and J.I. and Sonny Curtis finished, then you added the vocals. This time, they're going to overdub onto your vocals and basic tracks?

BM: Right on! Exactly!

BRUT: I thought it worked out pretty well on "Never Dreamed". It actually sounds like a band cut it in the studio.

BM: Yeah, I think it turned out

good. There were some really good players on it, like Burton, J.I., Joe Osborne on bass, Glen Hardin.

BRUT: You don't have any other long lost projects out there like this last one?

BM: Nope.

BRUT: Because this just seemed to pop up out of the blue... and J.P. says in the liner notes that he had those tapes in his closet for 21-22 years, and had forgotten all about them.

BM: That's what happened. He had never tried to sell the tapes. I put him in touch with Hans (Hans-Hermann Pohle) of Taxim Records, and Hans asked him to send him a copy, and they ended up making a deal.

BRUT: Hans has released some really cool CD's over the past several years... between Peter's (Lewis of Moby Grape - solo CD in 1995), and your recent one. He also released the first recordings of Muddy Waters' son, Big Bill Morganfield, and a solo CD from Kenny Brown, the tall white guy who plays slide guitar with R.L. Burnside.

BM: Yeah, Hans has had a good run of CD's on that label.

BRUT: Another subject... In last year's San Francisco Chronicle poll of Bay Area bands, the Grape placed 10th overall. While that's not as high as I think it should have been, it's higher than I was afraid it would be, what with Green Day and Metallica and other recent bands who've been commercially successful.

BM: We did alright on that, I thought.

BRUT: I found out that Joel Selvin, the chief music critic there, apparently has a book on Sly Stone coming out shortly - this, I suspect, is the reason Sly & The Family Stone placed so high (#1).

BM: (laughs) - Well, Sly was a good man. He hasn't been doing music for quite some time now. He went back to disk jockeying again for awhile, but I'm not sure what he's doing now.

BRUT: If you would, please, some comments from you on each of your records... First,

you played in several pre-Grape bands, notably The Misfits and The Frantics. I'm aware of one 45 The Misfits did, but did you record any with The Frantics?

BM: No, The Frantics had a couple of singles out in Seattle, but that was before I hooked up with them. Jerry (Miller) and Don (Stevenson) were both in that band. I also played with the Joel Scott Hill trio - Johnny Barbata was our drummer.

BRUT: Joel ended up in like, Canned Heat and The Flying Burrito Bros. for awhile, I think. Johnny wound up in the Turtles, then later the Jefferson Airplane or Starship.

BM: Yeah, I think you're right.

BRUT: It seems like Jerry Miller was in dozens and dozens of bands up there in the Northwest.

BM: Well, he was with Bobby Fuller for awhile, and once he left Fuller, everyone wanted to work with him, so he ended up in a lot of bands and had a lot of work. It's not like now - it's a little tough on him up there now because his music doesn't fit into any one category - he's like a crossover jazz/blues guitarist.

BRUT: Yeah, it seems like Jerry can play anything. He seems to be in a similar situation that the late Danny Gatton was in back here.

BM: Danny Gatton was great! He did that album called "Deuces"?

BRUT: "Cruising Deuces" it was. Yeah, he put out 5-6 LP's, but he was all over the place musically, with the jazz and rockabilly and country... and he didn't like to go out on the road to promote his records, so they never sold much. But he was a phenomenal player!

BM: Yeah, he definitely was... and I bought a lot of his records.

BRUT: The first Moby Grape LP - to me the best debut album in R&R history - but I am prejudiced (laughs) - How long did it take to get those songs together?

BM: We worked for 6 months in the Avalon, the Fillmore. Winterland and the Carousel weren't open yet, and there was the Ark, which we opened ourselves. We went into the studio

in Hollywood, and we recorded that album in 2 weeks. Big Brother with Janis Joplin was doing their album at the same time.

BRUT: That was the one on Mainstream? ("Big Brother & The Holding Company")

BM: Yep... and afterwards, both bands got together here in Larkspur and listened to the debut of both albums.

BRUT: The Big Brother LP was good, but it didn't capture Janis' voice properly, I thought.

BM: No, it didn't, and she left them shortly after that.

BRUT: The big seller they had on Columbia later ("Cheap Thrills"), that was from old live shows, right?

BM: Yes.

BRUT: And shortly after the first LP came out, you played Monterey, which you and Connie discussed with Ernesto on the Italian TV show. Do you know if that actually played on television over there?

BM: Actually, no I don't.

BRUT: Your 2nd album, "Wow", recorded in New York. While I think it holds up well over the years, and it has some of your best songs, it was a disappointment when it came out, primarily because it just wasn't as good as the debut - it didn't sound like the first one.

BM: Well, we weren't ready for the album - we had to do it for the record company. The producer, David Robinson, was calling for an album, so we left San Francisco for NY to do it. It was a tough one to do. Skippy got in a lot of trouble (*ED. NOTE. - Drug-influenced meltdown, culminating in his trying to attack Don Stevenson with an axe, and winding up in Bellevue for an extended stay. After his release from Bellevue, he went to Nashville to record the legendary "Oar"*), and it was just tough being in NY trying to do a California album. A bunch of guys playing in a studio, that's one thing...but when your songs just aren't finished, aren't together, that's another thing. We just weren't ready to do the album.

BRUT: I think a lot of those songs really hold up well, though - "Bitter Wind", "Murder In My Heart For the Judge",

"Can't Be So Bad". You added horns to some cuts, you added these strange sound effects to others. It came across as you were trying to "produce" this album, as opposed to the debut, where you just play a bunch of songs.

BM: Yeah, it was different! It was produced, all right - that was the problem!

BRUT: One of the things I really got a kick out of at the '97/'98 live shows, was hearing you sing "Can't Be So Bad" (sung on the LP by drummer Don Stevenson).

BM: I've got a recording of Joe Cocker singing it.

BRUT: I also understand Blood, Sweat & Tears cut a version of that song, with an arrangement almost the same as the Grape's...but it was left off either their 2nd or 3rd album.

BM: Yeah, I remember that.

BRUT: Your 3rd LP, "Moby Grape '69" — that was a low-key, very underrated bunch of songs that just flow so well together.

BM: We had just gotten back from Europe - we had done a 16 day tour of Amsterdam, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, England, and Scotland. We played some really good shows over there. When we got back, we had an LP to do. We stayed at Malibu and lived on the beach, and recorded up at CBS there. The Byrds were recording there at the same time.

BRUT: This would have been the McGuinn/Clarence White/Gene Parsons/John York version of the Byrds then. Were they recording "Dr. Byrds & Mr. Hyde" or "Ballad of Easy Rider"?

BM: They were recording "Easy Rider" then. We had a lot of fun with them.

BRUT: Clarence White was another unreal player, who was always underrated.

BM: Well, that was sign of the times back then.

BRUT: Someone on the egrouplist, I don't remember who, posted one time that they played "It's A Beautiful Day Today" from "MG'69" at his wedding - I thought that was a very nice touch!

BM: Yes, it was - and that's a good song!

BRUT: Yes, it is. After "69", as you mentioned in the Ernesto interview, you became disillusioned with the music business,

and it was reported that you quit the band to join the Marines. I understand, though, you first went back to school, and got drafted?

BM: Yes, I went to San Diego State, and I was in my junior year, carrying a really heavy workload, and it was getting very hard to keep up, so I volunteered to go into the Army. It was December that year, and I remember sitting at the induction center, waiting to get on the bus to go into the Army, when a Marine Corps recruiter stepped up and said they were looking for 13 volunteers for the Marines. If you went into the Marines, you could stay there in San Diego, so I jumped up and volunteered. That's how I wound up in the Marines.

BRUT: And, if I recall, you got out in time to rejoin the Grape to record "20 Granite Creek" in 1970.

BM: Yes, and that was a good album, too!

BRUT: I enjoyed everything on that LP, but I could never really get into Skip's "Chinese Song".

BM: He had just learned to play the koto, so he wrote that song on it.

BRUT: That LP is another where some of the songs have really held up well over the years. You guys always do "Gypsy Wedding" live. Speaking of which, has Buddy Guy ever acknowledged his "borrowing" of that song from you? (ED. NOTE: On Buddy Guy's 1998 release "Heavy Love", his original song "Midnight Train", performed with Johnny Lang, is basically "Gypsy Wedding" with new lyrics.)

BM: No, I've never heard him say anything about it. I guess they feel they have something they can run with. It's just like Led Zeppelin, with "Since I've Been Loving You", which is a re-write of "Never" from "Wow". No one's made any deals with me...and I just heard about this stuff fairly recently.

BRUT: It's always surprised me, Zeppelin having done that, since Robert Plant has always expressed such admiration for Moby Grape (ED. NOTE: - Even referring to them as "criminally underrated" in his Rock & Roll Hall of Fame acceptance speech). He's even recorded "8:05" and "Naked If I

Want To", as B-sides.

BM: Yeah, I know. It's surprising. - Well, I have somebody who plans on talking with a lawyer about looking into these situations, and I guess we'll see.

BRUT: I remember at the Wetlands shows, where you started singing "Midnight Train" in the middle of "Gypsy Wedding" - that was good!

BM: And I really like that song! It had just been released at that point.

BRUT: Your next record was your solo LP, "Bob Mosley" on Reprise/Warner Brothers, in 1972. I just bought a still-sealed copy of it via an eBay auction, to take the place of my old, scratched-up copy!

BM: That's great! That album was fun to do, I already had a band.

BRUT: I remember seeing ads for that in the trade papers. Didn't it sell fairly well?

BM: Yes it did, it made me some money. I was able to pay off some debts, and I had enough to live on for about ten years.

BRUT: Why hasn't that one ever been released on CD? It certainly sold a lot better than many of the LP's from that time which have come out on CD.

BM: We're talking with Sundazed now, and we're trying to get them to get Warner Brothers/Reprise to release the rights to it. Bill (Irwin), the guy who worked on Skippy's album (Oar re-release) is working on this.

BRUT: Most of the Sundazed re-issues have bonus cuts from the sessions added on. Are there any such cuts that might be available for "Bob Mosley"?

BM: No, not that I'm aware of.

BRUT: I always enjoyed that album, it has a good mix of Grape-type songs, and some soul songs with horns, and a country-flavored tune or two. You mentioned you had a band already. Did you tour in support of this LP?

BM: Yeah, we worked Squaw Valley in the winter, and Waikiki Beach in Hawaii during the next summer.

BRUT: We next heard from you on record with Jerry Miller, in the band Fine Wine.

BM: Yeah, we had the one album on Polydor.

BRUT: That was in 1976, and I don't believe it ever came out in

the U.S. To me, that was just another great Moby Grape album. The group vocals sounded like the Grape. Michael Been's voice seems to be in the same range as Peter's.

BM: He took Peter's spot. We rehearsed with Peter at his house, but then he wasn't on the record.

BRUT: Did Fine Wine ever play out?

BM: No, we were called California.

BRUT: I assume the name "Fine Wine" was used since you couldn't use "Moby Grape"?

BM: That's correct.

BRUT: Between that album and the 1983 LP called "Moby Grape" (but known to fans as the Heart Album due to the Mouse cover artwork), you played around Southern California in a variety of bands. I'm sure the one everyone asks you about is the band you had with Neil Young.

BM: That was The Ducks - with me, Neil, John Craviotto (Fine Wine drummer), and Jeff Blackburn, who still plays in Santa Cruz nowadays.

BRUT: How long were The Ducks together?

BM: About 3 months. We started getting a lot of media attention, so Neil wanted to call it off.

BRUT: The new CD that came out in '99, "Never Dreamed" - was that recorded before or after the Fine Wine LP?

BM: I did that one around the same time.

BRUT: We next heard from you on the '83 "Moby Grape" LP, the Heart album. Aside from several good Peter Lewis tunes and, if I recall, one Jerry-Don song, it seems like this was almost a solo effort of your's.

BM: Yes, I had 5 or 6 new songs on it, and I sang lead on most of the album.

BRUT: I believe Jerry and Don were only on a cut or two, and you used a bunch of other musicians I had never heard of.

BM: Yeah, and we had some trouble with the Russian fellow, Grisha Dimant (guitarist), who was all over the place. That LP was done very quickly. Peter's the one who got me to do this album. He had some artwork in hock, so he had to get an album out to make some money. He came down to San Diego and talked me into doing it. I

didn't want to.

BRUT: It always struck me that any combination of two original Grape members together is almost magical, as far as your sound goes. Jerry & you in Fine Wine, Peter & you on the Heart album, Jerry, Peter & Skip on "Live Grape", and so on.

BM: Yes, we always have had a sort of chemistry there.

BRUT: In 1986, you put out a limited edition solo EP, "Wine and Roses". To this day, I still haven't seen a copy, but I have a CD-R made from a scratchy copy of it.

BM: There were only 500 copies of that pressed. I worked with Willie Kellogg, with an acoustic guitar and drum set.

BRUT: It was very primitive-sounding and very acoustic-oriented. "I Picked A Rose" from that EP is a great song! Wouldn't that sound great covered by an old C&W singer like, say, George Jones?

BM: Yeah, it really would. Larry Hosford, a musician out of Salinas, California, has covered it. He plays it live in his sets.

BRUT: This brings us to your 1989 album, "Mosley Grape - Live At Indigo Ranch", which you cut with a bunch of unknown musicians (NOTE: aside from noted Nashville pianist Earl P. Ball and the aforementioned Grisha Dimant on guitars).

BM: I was in the middle of some hard times then and I needed money. I didn't get paid much for this, and I had no say-so at all on it. It was originally put together for Earl Ball, Johnny Cash's piano player - he was looking for musicians to play with. The next thing I knew, it had been released. I discount the whole thing.

BRUT: It sounds like just scratch or reference vocal takes on most of the songs.

BM: That's exactly what they were. They were all done live.

BRUT: When you compare your vocal take on "They Took It All Away" on this with that done the next year on "The Melvilles", it's like night and day! The Melvilles version sounds like you at your peak from back in the 60's. So the "Mosley Grape" LP was essentially some practice sessions tossed out as a genuine release?

BM: That's about it.

BRUT: Speaking of "The Melvilles," which you guys put out as a cassette-only release in 1990, I think that is truly a classic Grape album!

BM: I agree, I love it too!

BRUT: And that was primarily you and Jerry doing the song-writing.

BM: Yes, and Don was on the album, and Peter got in on it with some vocals as well.

BRUT: I remember reading somewhere that Peter was saving his new songs for his upcoming solo album ("Peter Lewis" on Taxim, released in 1995).

BM: Yeah, I think he was, but he couldn't have worked up a lot of those songs with us anyway, they were too difficult.

BRUT: I really love Peter's solo CD, but it just sounds a little too slick or clean or something to me... I always thought it would have sounded a lot better with Jerry on guitar, you on bass, and the Grape doing backing vocals. And I know he's played some of those songs live with you guys, and they sounded great!

BM: John McFee of the Doobie Brothers helped him produce that album, and he played the guitar leads on it.

BRUT: Back to The Melvilles for just a second - Are the master tapes still around? Because I've read before that it can never be released, that the masters no longer exist...

BM: Actually, I don't know anything about that. Jerry and Don had the masters of it, and they say they were burned up in a fire. I don't know if I really believe that or not - I think there may still be master copies around somewhere.

BRUT: The original cassette I got, I played it about 8 million times, and I finally got a copy on CD-R a couple of years ago.

BM: That's good.

BRUT: We last heard from you on record with "Never Dreamed", where you sang the vocals over J.P. Whitecloud's backing tapes. While it's someone else's songs, I think the arrangements are pretty cool, and you know, you've always been one of my all-time favorite singers, Bob. As far as I'm concerned, you could sing the contents of your local phone book, and it would sound great!

BM: (Laughs) Thanks.

BRUT: Speaking of singers, who are some of your favorites over the years? I would assume that you were heavily influenced by soul, R&B and blues singers mostly?

BM: Yes, soul and blues singers - B.B. King, Albert King... all those guys... I loved 50's music, I've been singing those old songs for years - the Righteous Brothers, Bill Haley & The Comets, Buddy Holly, Elvis... I liked them all... and this is kind of how "Never Dreamed" evolved. It was me just going in and singing like a choir boy, a bunch of songs I wasn't familiar with, and it was fun to do!

BRUT: I really like a lot of the stuff on there - the title track is great, the couple of blues songs on there, your cover of the Moody Blues song ("Question") just cuts Justin Hayward to shreds, I think! Speaking of covers, do you have a favorite cover of a grape song that was recorded by another artist?

BM: I mentioned it earlier - it's Joe Cocker's cover of "Can't Be So Bad".

BRUT: You're familiar with the British band Diesel Park West? They've done a bunch of Moby Grape covers.

BM: Yeah, sure, they did a good job on "Lazy Me", and they've also done "Bitter Wind", "Hoochie", and a couple others.

BRUT: They did a slowed-down arrangement of "Hey Grandma", and they've also done a couple of Skip's songs from "Oar" - "Little Hands" and "All Come to Meet Her". Good band. What would your idea of a dream cover of a Grape song be, assuming you could use anyone in history? Where I'm coming from - I'd love to hear Otis Redding do "Mr. Blues".

BM: Ooh, that'd be a good one! I'd like to hear "Come In The Morning" by one of the bands that Connie has now - the Persuasions.

BRUT: The a capella band? That's right, they're on the Grateful Dead label now, aren't they? Didn't they just do an LP of Dead covers?

BM: Yes, they did, and I'd love to hear them do "Come In The Morning" a capella.

BRUT: Question — they put out the Skip Spence tribute a couple of years ago ("More Oar"). Why hasn't there ever been a

Moby Grape tribute album?

BM: Well, there was the one, the "Mo' Grape" CD.

BRUT: That's right, I have that and it's great, but it was also done independently by members of the eGroup and fans. I wonder why one of the large labels hasn't come up with a tribute, with big name acts like the Skip tribute? (ED. NOTE: "More Oar" contained tracks by Robert Plant, Tom Waits and the like).

BM: I don't know. I don't think there's ever been much of a push by any record executives or companies to have one done. Our biggest problem as a band was that we were just musicians trying to do our own material, and we couldn't deal with the record executives, the management end of the business.

BRUT: Without getting into any detail, I think it's safe to say that you guys basically had to watch out for your own best interests, in lieu of relying on management or record companies or anybody else.

BM: Very true.

BRUT: There's talk on the eGroup about doing a sequel to "Mo' Grape".

BM: Yeah, I'm looking forward to it!

BRUT: Question about bass playing. I think you were one of the very best bassists out of SF in the 60's, right up there with Jack Casady and Phil Lesh. I was listening to "Changes" on the debut album as I was driving over here - great bass line! Who were some of your favorite bassists?

BM: I really liked Chris Hillman (Byrds).

BRUT: Yeah, he was great, I remember listening to "Younger Than Yesterday", all those songs with the great bass, like "Everybody's Been Burned". Chris has the same birthday as you, correct?

BM: That's right.

BRUT: He ended up being a C&W star with the Desert Rose Band in the 80's and early 90's.

BM: He started out as a bluegrass mandolin player.

BRUT: Did you start out on bass or guitar?

BM: Guitar, although actually, I played the ukelele prior to that.

BRUT: Question - What music do you listen to and enjoy nowadays?

BM: I don't listen to too much new stuff, that hip hop and pop music. Eminem is interesting — he did a pretty good job at the Grammys on his duet with Elton John.

BRUT: I'm pretty much out of questions, Bob... ah, I remember I wanted to ask you about the Buffalo Springfield book. Have you read Richie Furay's book, "For What It's Worth", about the Buffalo Springfield? In it, he pretty much says that he felt Moby Grape borrowed the 3 guitar, multiple harmony concept from his band... and I always thought that the two bands developed at the same time, one in San Francisco, the other in Los Angeles.

BM: Yes, that's what happened. That's too bad he said that. I haven't read that book yet.

BRUT: He admits in there that their biggest hit "For What It's Worth", was a combination of the Grape's "Murder In My Heart For The Judge" and another song you used to do live. Personally, I loved Buffalo Springfield and their music, and some of their individual band

members certainly achieved a lot more commercial success later on than you guys, but... I just think the Grape was a better band than the Springfield, both live and on record!

BM: Yes, I agree!

BRUT: Are there any specific memorable gigs you've done that stick out in your mind over the years?

BM: Well, aside from Monterey in '67, I always enjoyed the gigs we did back where you are, in D.C. We got to do a lot of sightseeing and see all the monuments and sights there.

BRUT: Did you play D.C. once or twice?

BM: We played there twice, I think.

BRUT: I saw you at the Ambassador Theater in late '67, and I saw Hendrix there earlier that year, about the time his first album was released, but before he was famous. There were like about 200 people there for that show, and if you talk to native Washingtonians now, you'll find about three million who claimed to have been there!

BM: (laughs) Three million, that's good! We played with him at the Polo Grounds in San Francisco, very impressive guitarist and showman!

BRUT: At the end of your interview with Ernesto, when you're asked to give advice for young musicians, you recommend that they get along with their fellow band members...and if they stop liking each other, move on. I guess the Grape band members have always liked each other for 35 years at this point?

BM: Well, we've had our ups and downs, but yeah, we're there for each other. Another important piece of advice is to hang onto your publishing rights. Keep your work your-

self.

BRUT: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I don't believe I've seen an interview with you published anywhere for the last 20 years or so. I've seen interviews with Jerry and Peter and Skip, and Don's pretty much left music.

BM: That's true, I haven't done one in awhile.

BRUT: Well, it's been an honor and a privilege to talk with you, Bob, and I really hope to see you on the road again, and I'd love to hear some more records by you and Moby Grape, whether live or in the studio.

BM: We hope to get to it!

BRUT: We thank you!!!

BM: You're welcome, John.

BQ

John Oliver is a regular staffer for *Brutarian*. Visit him at:
www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/oliverjohn.htm

Ernesto de Pascale is not a regular contributor, but we hope to see him again! Check him out at:
www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/others/depascaleernesto.htm

reach the sky
Friends, Lies, and The End Of The World
MARCH 20, 2001
THURSDAY
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Ozzy has no idea what they're smoking over at the Showtime Channel but He's certain it's some pretty good shit. They've started this new channel called Extreme and the programming consists of nothing but trash. That's right, trash. Grade Z exploitation fare. Straight to video features. Movies with lots of Roman numerals in the titles. That's extreme, daddy-o! That's also, as far as Mr. Fide is concerned, entertainment.

Hell, look at this, the programming schedule for April 19th, and this is a typical day, folks: Slaughter's Big Rip Off, a pathetic 1973 Jim Brown vehicle; Madhouse, a 1974 Vincent Price horror flick that looked to have been filmed by lunatics; American Yakuza a 1994 release which finds Viggo Mortensen working undercover in the LA branch of the Yakuza which is followed by The Rage: Carrie 2. Does it get any better than this? Is Oz now thinking of early retirement and never getting up off his beer and burrito-stained couch? You bet He is . . . Read on, what follows is important . . .

Breakfast at the Manchester Morgue (1974)

(aka *Let Sleeping Corpses Lie*, et al.)

Recently unearthed, uncut version of one of the more successful zombie flicks washing up in the wake of *Night of the Living Dead*. Not because this Spanish-Italian production is particularly inventive or coherent. Or stylish. Or even intelligent. No, the film works because it's played relatively straight and the undead are pretty darn scary. Yup, these beasties look freshly dead, sound as if they're drawing their last few breaths and perhaps most importantly, move about as if they're generally in great pain. Which makes their depredations on the living all the more understandable. What isn't understandable is why the ghouls feel the need to rip open a gal's blouse before they eat them but, hey, Oz isn't complaining. You won't either, as the gals are quite attractive and they're pulled apart real good. In fact, the special effects are rather effective for a movie made in 1974 and once we're introduced to the central characters and given the explanation for the dead rising — an ultrasound wave machine being tested as a possible replacement for crop pesti-

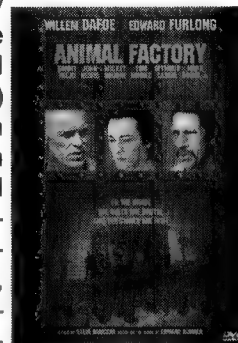
cides - we get one delightfully shocking scene after another. The American distributor of this film, which was originally titled *House On The Edge of the Park*, released it here as *Don't Open The Window* in a brazen attempt to cash in on the success of Wes Craven's *Last House On The Left*. Even the ad campaign — "Keep repeating: It's only a movie. It's only a movie" — was purloined.

It didn't work. So the film was withdrawn and quickly re-released as *Breakfast at the Manchester Morgue*. That didn't help either.



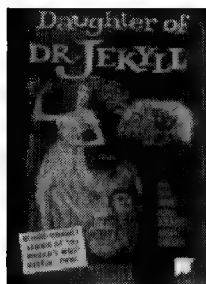
Animal Factory (2000)

An engrossing prison film adapted by Edwin Bunker from his novel of the same name finds drug-dealing boy toy Edward Furlong (surprisingly effective here) sucking up to boss con Willem Dafoe in a desperate attempt to keep his ass from becoming permanently dilated. Moved by Furlong's persona more than his furtive machinations, Willem takes him under his wing and, while schooling him, the viewer gets what feels like an authentic slice of prison life. Steve Buscemi, in his second directorial outing since the criminally underrated *Tres Lounge*, underplays it all, recognizing, as we all should, that the real horror of prison isn't the rapes or the knifings but the mindless drudgery of prison life, the soul-stultifying routine, the almost total absence of hope. Genre fans, fret not, we're not talking Jean Genet here; there's plenty of hardboiled dialogue and real life horror in the form of Tom "Roseanne Barr" Arnold as a hulking rapist and, hold on for this, Mickey Rourke as a ster-oided-out, badly made-up drag queen. Man, it's a long slow way down from Johnny Handsome to this, eh Mickey?



Daughter of Dr. Jekyll (1957)

A long lost horror flick by the visionary auteur of *The Black Cat* (1934) and *Detour* (1946) that should have stayed



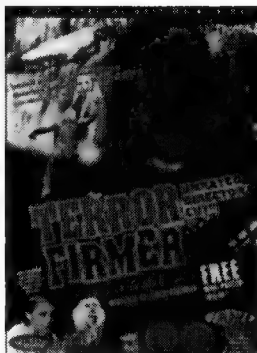
lost. Gloria Talbott must refuse the hand of John Agar because she has become convinced the "Hyde" side of her late father's personality has pitched his tent in her psyche. Camp premise is lost in a lot of meaningless blather and what little tension Ulmer manages to generate is ameliorated by the syrupy symphonic score which is allowed to meander through much of this.

And hey, Edgar, what's up with the staking of a werewolf. You worked for Universal, you know you need silver bullets or a silver-headed cane for that trick.



Terror Firmer (1999)

The "best" Troma films dispense with narrative and plotting in favor of mindless excess; the "worst" try to tell a story. And telling a story, when you think hard on it, be rather pointless when you're making movies about toxic mutants, surf Nazis and intellectually-challenged fat kids. Thankfully, Troma's latest effort, pace major league publications like The Village Voice ("Terror Firmer is self-referential absurdist burlesque"), is little more than a premise. A premise tarted up with cheesy, gory special effects moronic dialogue and graphic nudity. Troma co-founder Lloyd Kaufman stars (sort of) as a blind director trying to make a movie while all about him people are losing their heads — literally — and blaming it on him. Near the end of the flick we are allowed to discover that the murderer is a cross dressing serial killer (sort of) but you'll be too sick from laughing to care. Unless you're the kind that thinks genital mutilation and child abuse is not the stuff of comedy. Oz does and while he's at it He'd like to thank the folks at Go-Kart Records for putting together the loud, bombastic soundtrack — Motorhead, Lunachics, Entombed, Candy Snatchers — adorning the mind-blowing mayhem here. Although it's only January as Mr. Fide writes this, it's hard to envision any pic beating this



messterpiece out for the coveted Brutarian Film of the Year Award. Unless its a really, really self-referential absurdist burlesque.



Black Samson (1974)

Y'all heard 'bout Blackenstein. Blacula, too, no doubt. Bet you didn't know there was a Black Samson. Oh yes. Big strapping fella, With a big thick lion's head cane and a lion on a chain. Good man, too. Keeps the streets clean. Free of the influence of "the Man." That's white man to you, peckerwood! Yeah, keeps drugs and such out of the hood while helpin' junkies and alcoholics straighten up and fly right. Don't understand how people take this Black Samson fella all

that seriously 'bout the straight life since he dispenses most of his wisdom and ass-whuppin from a titty bar he owns. Maybe it has something to do with the lion Samson's got chained to the back wall. Maybe that's it. Anyway, "the Man" in the form of William Smith (the square-jawed guy who got his butt kicked in that Clint Eastwood baboon movie) decides it's time to set up shop in Samson's neck of the woods. Smith must be crazy because he sends all these old, balding white pieces of trash to do Samson in. Ain't no way

they a match for a buff daddy carrying a stick the size of a redwood tree. No way, Jose. So Smith goes for the Achilles heel. That's right: Samson's petite, twenty-pound-Afro totin', feisty, pouty-lipped Mama. Snatches her from the funeral parlor cum drug den of one of Samson's buddies. (For a righteous motherfucker, Samson sure has a lot of morally challenged friends.) Good God, things look black, er bad, for brother Samson. Can he do it? Can he rescue his gal from a heavily guarded warehouse, make a clean getaway, hit the streets, whip the civilians into shape, arm them and then lead his tatterdemalion army to an utter rout of "the Man?" What the fuck do you think, rat-faced sucker? This is a movie! Before it all comes down, howsome ever, you're treated to plenty of gratuitous violence in the form of clumsily-staged



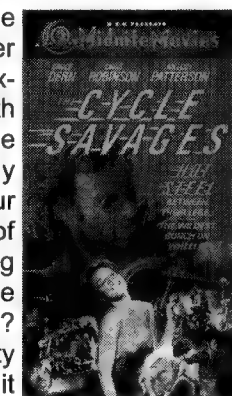
fight scenes, inane misogyny and racist caricatures so outlandish they would likely have embarrassed Lester Madox. Course we'd expect no less from a picture made by... "the Man."

Cycle Savages (1969)

Roaring thru the streets on chopped down hogs! These are the wildest bunch of the 70s. Or so the posters would have you believe. Actually, this motorcycle gang is anything but wild. Oh their leader, Keeg, a white slave-trader played by Bruce Dern, is a genuine psychopath (you can tell because he doesn't shave and his clothes look kind of ratty). Still, he whines an awful lot for a town menace. He's really a poor fighter as well, getting beat up easily and quickly, as do his unwashed brethren, by a guy drawing pictures for a living. The picture drawing fellow has run afoul of Keeg first because he insisted on drawing the moronic marauders when they were mugging some hapless civilian. Then this paint dabbler had the temerity to fall for Keeg's ex-girlfriend whilst being nursed back to health after Big K knifed him. The nerve of some people's children! Undaunted by nearly having his kidney shish kebabbled, our square-jawed hero makes for the evil lair of Keeg and, told Keeg is out canvassing main street does a number on two of the henchmen in reprisal. Keeg's response? Crush the artist's hands. Which is a pretty nasty scene but Oz doubts you'll make it



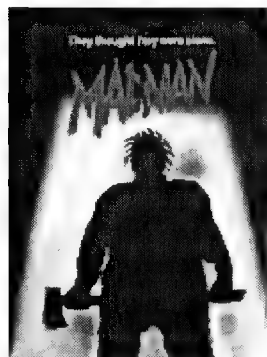
One brothers war against the Man.



this far as the dialogue is lame beyond belief; the violence poorly staged and effeminately choreographed. Co-produced by then California Lt. Governor, Mike "The Fascist" Curb and Casey "Amerikan Top Forty" Kasem in an attempt to make a quick buck in the burgeoning cycle cinema scene, Cycle Savages commits the cardinal and almost impossible sin of being dreadful "and" unamusing. The one star is for Melody — she was Wrangler Jane on *F-Troop* — Patterson's nude scenes. Hubba! Hubba!



Madman (1981)



No less a camp authority than Joe Bob Briggs appends his seal of approval to the release of this 80's slasher flick with a number eight rating in his list of the ten all-time greatest drive-in features. Released hurriedly in 1981 to beat the similarly themed *The Burning*, to the theaters, the film was almost universally panned as a poorly made Friday the 13th imitation. To the surprise of most of its detractors, *Madman* did rather well, and looking at it twenty years later, it's easy to see why. First

of all, the move is pretty damn scary and contains a number of nicely extended shock sequences. Sure, the ghostly maniac stalking innocents in the woods was then, and remains today, a hoary cliché. It works here because the filmmakers keep their tongue firmly in their cheeks while using every cinematic and narrative trick in the book to keep us interested. Secondly, the lighting and photography are top notch, no day for night sequences or dark filters for these boys; if you're going to steal whole scenes from *Halloween* and *The Thing*, you might as well make sure the audience gets to appreciate your homage (that's French for theft). Finally, while the characters aren't too sharply drawn, they're far from the oversexed, semi-literate teenagers often found in this sub-genre. While this doesn't result in the viewer necessarily rooting for any of the campers to survive, it does tend to elicit a bit more sympathy for their plight. Especially when they're fully dressed.



Truck Turner (1974)



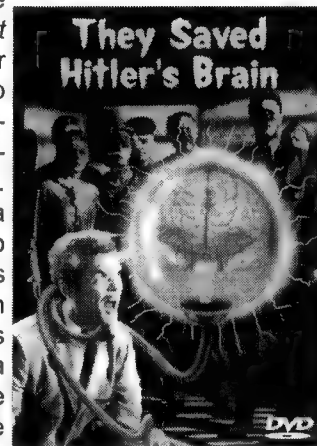
The movie that was designed to make Isaac Hayes a star. And missed by a country mile. There were several reasons for this aside from the fact that the film is a farrago of racist stereotyping, misogyny, dreadful acting and inane plotting. The principal reason for the film's failure lies with Hayes himself. To be charitable, Isaac ain't the best looking brother on the planet. In fact, let's be uncharitable, the guy looks like a slightly rotting Mr. Potato

Head. So how is the audience supposed to keep from laughing when the women in the flick are falling all over themselves whenever he enters the room? Had Hayes perhaps worked on his diction he might have been better able to cut a more swashbuckling figure. Would have helped his co-stars understand him, too. Which they clearly do not, as Black Moses, for whatever reason, chooses to speak in a patois of his own devise. One which bears only a passing resemblance to English. So a typical exchange in Truck Turner finds Isaac saying something on the order of, "Dis Baronish summertime comeback Jackson," and the obviously stunned addressee responding with a sheepish grin, an inarticulate shout and/or wild laughter. Still, Truck is bad. He's a bounty hunter working the ghetto. A bounty hunter who eschews food in favor of drink. Usually Southern Comfort with a six pack chaser. Naturally, this diet makes Truck a little testy. A little quick with his fists. A little quick on the draw. So when a pimp doesn't come quietly when our main man tries to bring him in, Truck, with a cry of, "Sandwich nar delano," guns him down. This gets the dead pimp's main "bitch" (Nichelle Nichols, aka Lt. Uhura on *Star Trek*) thirsty for revenge. She goes to Yaphet Kotto, the suavely dressed big boss pimp and agrees to sell her man's stable to him at a discount if he'll take out Truck. Much violence and incoherent dialogue follows. *Truck Turner* is miserable even by blaxploitation standards but Hayes is so wonderfully and remarkably wrong he turns the whole sorry exercise into a non-stop laugh riot.



They Saved Hitler's Brain (1968)

This may not be the worst movie ever made; nevertheless, Mr. Fide stands ready to put this amazing atrocity up against any film anyone would care to bring to the table. *Manos Hand of Fate*? Pure genius in comparison. Larry Buchanan's *It's Alive*? That's entertainment, folks! Notice Oz isn't even mentioning the oeuvre of Ed Wood. That's because Wood's films, like the aforementioned titles, may be piss-poor examples of filmmaking but they are entertaining in their own awful way. Yeah, with something like *It's Alive*, it's pure dumb luck that makes such wretchedness palatable; still, do such considerations even enter into it when talking about trash? Maybe if you're Susan Sontag or a writer for *Sight and Sound*. But back to the matter at hand, *Hitler's Brain* stinks to high heaven not because it's ineptly made, which it is, but because it's also incredibly boring. Of course, you'd have to have a heart of stone not to be moved to hysterics by the sight of Hitler's head (they don't just save the brain here but the head and shoulders as well) being carted around in a bell jar. However, it's not until the final fifteen minutes or so that we



are treated to this risible sight. Until that time the viewer is asked to piece together a narrative having something to do with a deadly nerve gas, a secret antidote and a Nazi cell in southern California. Yeah, I know it sounds hilarious but the dialogue never rises above the level of pure exposition. There's no real exchange between the players and so no real character development. We're just fed information by various talking heads — "I am going to the car." "He has read the files on the deadly gas." Take that, add static camerawork and impoverished sets and what the DVD renters get is something a tad less interesting, say, than a monotone recitation of the Des Moines Telephone Directory. Ah, we still entertain doubts, don't we? We have seen *The Beast of Yucca Flats* and know for a certainty that that remarkable audacity remains absolutely the bottom of the cinematic barrel. Well then, by all means, rent this damned thing. Rent it and sleep. **ZERO CANS**



you'll have a fine old time with the story of a trio of desperate gangsters. their hostages and their hijacked car. All of which Bava uses primarily as an excuse to humiliate his sole female character. She's pawed. She's licked. She's probed. When pleading to have the auto pulled over so she can go to the bathroom she's asked, while our predators convulse in hilarity, whether she "has to shit or pee." A few moments later the viewer gets the answer when the woman is forced to urinate in front of two of the crew. Occasionally, Mario allows our attention to turn to the drive of the car. He has a sick young child in the front seat. Conversation is allowed to center on how much pain the bambino would feel if stuck with a stiletto. That's entertainment, ain't it boys and girls? Ozzy, depraved as he likes to think himself, thinks not. **ZERO CANS**



BQ

Ozzy Fide is usually drunk, but he doesn't hold that against us. Check him out at:
www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/others/fideozzy.htm

Schramm (1993)

Jorge Buttegeit is perhaps best known for his groundbreaking necrophiliac-splatter flick *Nekromantik*, but this relatively unknown 1993 feature is equally good. Good in this case meaning poetically stomach churning. Like Joyce's Finnegan's *Wake*, *Schramm*'s largely stream of consciousness story begins with our hero falling off a ladder. From there we go backwards and forwards in time watching the protagonist relive his fairly uneventful life. Uneventful except for that part which finds Schramm amusing himself by hacking people to death, having sex with corpses and repeatedly nailing his penis to a board. Well, perhaps it was a wonderful life after all. What makes this all so intriguing is Buttegeit's artful editing and restless, gently intrusive camerawork. There's a real attempt to at once distance the viewer from what's taking place and to insidiously rub our faces in it. We're shocked, made complacent, then dreamily sucked in. And in the end we're left asking ourselves how did we get to this place? This place where the savage and the sordid tug on the heartstrings; where the repulsive charms.



Rabid Dogs (1974)

A lost Mario "Bay of Blood" "Kill Baby Kill" Bava film, recently resurfacing, which should have stayed lost. Unless you think that Wes Craven's *Last House On The Left* is some kind of cinematic masterpiece. In that case,

On Manor's mind.....

by Stately
Wayne Manor

Rather than brainstrain to segue a group of random thoughts together as is usually the case with OMM, I've decided to go with a series of open letters this quarter. Should you have been expecting the standard column and thus demand a refund, by all means send a note to statelywaynemanor@aol.com. It's not my address, but feel to write there nonetheless, crybaby.

Dear Extreme Goth People:

You are not from Transylvania. You are not Christopher Lee or Vampira. You are a laughing stock — and deservedly so.

Trekkies are predominantly white and middle-class, dress absurdly to imitate a non-existent world from a fantasy series, and can't dance a lick. Complete losers, you'd say, yes? But change their theme movie to *Dracula*, and they're...YOU!

Dear Third-rate Screenwriters:

Having an obviously Yank actor call someone "a wanker" in a ridiculously fraudulent Cockney accent to signify he's "English" is like having him wear a T-shirt that says "Wouldn't know the Thames from a Tampon." Oh, and do tell the rest of the hacks there's no union rule stating the same asinine accent must be affected by anyone playing a "rock star."

Dear Sting:

Just wanted to thank you for making my job so much easier over the past year. It used to be, I'd occasionally have to argue to prove my contention you're a phony and a pretentious asshole. But after the "working-class hero" who rode in on the coattail of punk charged around a C-note per concert ticket and did a TV ad for Jaguar Motors, I hardly have to convince *anyone*!

Tell me, Gordo, me boy: The leather seats and wood trim on super luxury cars—they come from animals and trees that commit suicide, right? Just checking, Mr. Concerned Environmentalist.

Keep up the great work, Stinkeroo. I very much look forward to seeing you replace Heston as the NRA's chief shill.

Dear Aging Women Who Comb Their Hair Into Their Face To Hide The Advancing Years:

Hey, gals, this female equivalent of the

balding guy comb-over—otherwise known as "The Ann-Margaret" at the Stately Salon — does an incredible job. Nobody's going to call you a granny with that clever styling. "An immeasurably vain, fatuous, broken-down-cheap-hooker-looking old hag," maybe, Miss Kitty, but certainly not "granny."

Dear SNL:

It had been ages since I last caught your program and—though I blush to admit this—I apparently missed the announcement that you were changing your format to straight drama (if I may use the term "straight" in reference to a show with Chris Kattan in its cast.)

At any rate, I am writing to pass along a sincere apology. I was in a bar the other night when your program came on, and at one point during the first hour, a singular patron let out a stifled titter midway through one of your dramatic readings. Believe you me, I severely admonished this coarse fellow for his rudeness; and, I have utmost confidence no one else will laugh during your fine program the entire remainder of the season.

Dear Athletes Discussing Paydays:

Um, fellas, don't look now but nobody with the least bit of sense is buying into that "I've gotta do what's best for my family" routine you run when you *really* mean, "Screw loyalty; I'm going to work for whom-ever pays me the most."

Don't get me wrong: it's entirely acceptable coming from a 19-year-old from the projects ditching college for the NBA. But when a multimillionaire thumbs his nose at an eight-figure offer then turns around and tries to deflect his boundless greed by slipping into his "Concerned provider" cap, that's a baloney sandwich nobody at the Manor Mansion is biting on.

What family can't scrape by on "only" 40 mil, the friggin' Cosa Nostra?!? Cut the crap, jockstrap.

Dear Drew Carey:

It's wonderful that your use of "Cleveland Rocks" has put a few pints on the table of poor, underappreciated Ian Hunter. But would you mind doing me an itty-bitty favor? STAY THE HELL HOME FOR ONE STINKIN' NIGHT!

There's the sitcom, the syndicated version of same, ads for both, Pay Per Views, ads for other products; on the tube, in print, glued to the bus stop plastic arch. Worse yet, there you are promoting the most irritating, aren't-I-bloody-brilliant medium on the entire planet. (Some call it "improv.")

Well, at least I can enjoy the King Of Sports in peace. Let's see, I'll just flip on the WWF Survivor Series; and coming down the aisle towards the ring is...OH, NO, NOT YOU AGAIN!

Ever hear the expression "Familiarity breeds contempt," Drew? Well, you're getting so familiar, I'd like to wring your goddamn neck — if you had one.

Dear Members Of The Scientific Community:

Come on, you can tell your old pal Stately: you guys take a secret pledge swearing to grow really goofy hair from the neck up, correct?

Dear MTV:

You mean, if you point a camera with a worldwide feed at drunken immature Spring Break revelers or, better still, preening self-consumed pop stars forever attempting to nurture their phony "wild child" images, they'll do something wildly "outrageous" (like tearing the tag off a mattress)?!? Wow, deeyoods, you are just so "cutting edge" and "pushing the envelope."

Oh, um, while I like have your attention, could you remind me what the "M" in your initials stands for? I can't seem to recall.

Dear People Who Bend Their Arm At The Elbow, Jerk It Back And Exclaim, "Yes!":

Isn't it wonderful what they've trained

you automatons to do these days? And I bet, if I ask why you perform said ritual, not a single one of you would be able to supply an answer... besides, of course, monkey see, monkey do.

Dear Lou Reed:

Nice one! I thought it was a hoot hearing a Muzak version of "Perfect Day" in a supermarket once; but catching it as the theme for an NFL ad campaign was...well, this *easily* surpasses the motor company using "Walk On The Wild Side," as far as putting one over on the squares.

If you can imagine how shocked the fogies on the Board Of Directors would have been had they a clue "Wild Side" chronicled drag queens and male prostitutes, just think of how many cardiacs the ultramacho, tight-assed, unfunky football bigwigs would suffer if they knew their spokesperson lived with a transvestite, had numerous shock treatments, included "shooting up" in his stage show and wrote a paean to heroin!

Hell, you'd likely kill half the jocksnifers in the *universe* if you convinced the NFL to let you play the Super Bowl half-time circus, then performed "Metal Machine Music." And if you can't get that gig, think of the damage you could cause by volunteering to work the league's annual awards banquet and crooning "I Want To Play Football For The Coach" in all its fey glory.

Dear Yo Yo Ma:

Just wondering — are your groupies known as "Yo Yo Ma Mamas"? To get your attention, does one shout "Yo, Yo," or is that considered redundant?

Dear Denise Richards,

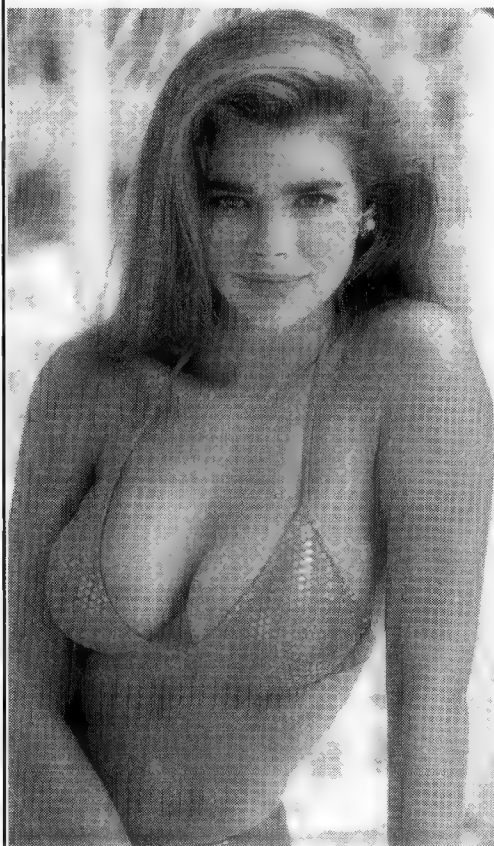
All right, all right, I WILL "go to the

movies and make out" with you next time you're in NYC or Philly! Now, *please*, enough with the phone machine messages and letters, already!

Dear Denise Richards:

Me, again. Forgot to mention you are this issue's special Hubba Hubba Honey. Though I'm heartbroken you weren't in the *Starship Trooper* shower scene, and I usually select senioritas who have been around a bit longer, I am half-mystified someone with your flawless frame and face didn't instantly become "Absolutely IT" with America's yoots. I say "half" because these are the same pinheads who instead plaster their walls with Limp Bizkit posters, bought *Dude, Where's My Car?* tickets and consider the subwoofer the ultimate engineering achievement. No *wonder* you're crazy about me.

BQ

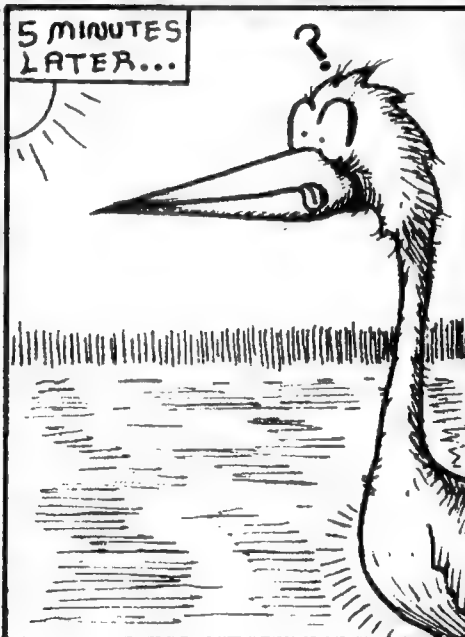
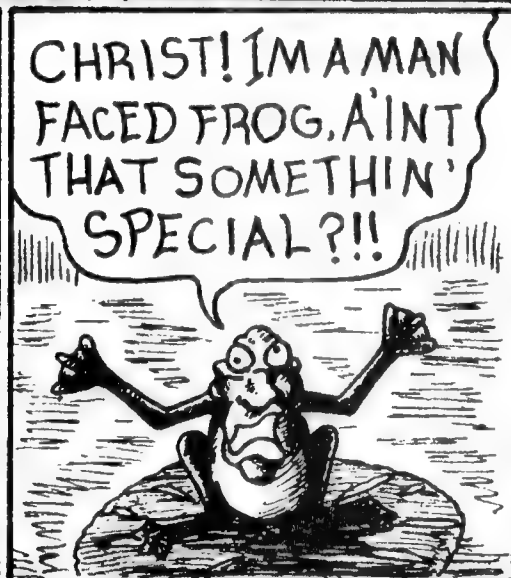


Stately Wayne Manor has been a regular columnist here for three thousand years. His obsession with gorgeous creatures like the HHH above, despite his actual chances of bedding them being only slightly better than your getting struck by lightning eleven times in one week on the Moon, doesn't stop him from exercising his unbridled ego — befitting of the official World's Most Conceited Man. If you want to learn more about him — and, hell, who *wouldn't* — visit him at:

<http://www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/manorstatelywayne.htm>

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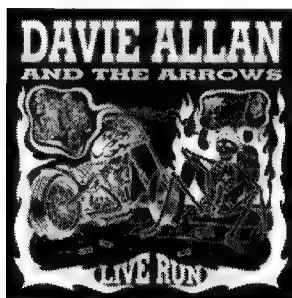
< www.themaryjanes.com >

AUDIO DEPRAVATION



Davie Allan & The Arrows: Live Run (Bomp)

The rock annals find Mr. Allan listed under surf but his muscular, slightly feral brand of rock swing was actually the bridge between that frothy genre and the surreal excesses of psychedelica. Allan peaked commercially in the late 60s with his classic buzzing, fuzz and feedback drenched intros for some two dozen campy film soundtracks including *The Wild Angels* and *The Glory Stompers* but he never really went away. The last three years or so have seen the release of a number of fine discs by this testosterone-fueled axeman but this is easily the best of the bunch as it allows Davie to stretch his wings and create lithesome sonic sculptures out of short simple snappy songs. The trademark fuzz abounds but its the judicious use of feedback, distortion and reverb to create mood and subtly alter color and texture that pro-



vide the rush. This can be heard to best effect on the disc's final cut, the nearly ten minute, "The Missing Link," a veritable lysergic symphony of psychedelic delights.

-Dom Salemi

Bow Roethke: What Was A Scare (Empty View Rekerdz)

Gentle folk weirdness courtesy of a two guitar-single drum kit combo from San Jose, California. One finds oneself immediately drawn in as the first cut, a spooky, beguiling confection drifts out of the speakers to fog your brain with its endearingly clunky chords drifting o'er the wistful, little-girl-lost vocals. Listen! Oh, listen! It is the reveries of a young woman weaving fantasies while strapped to her "stale marshmallow bed." The five other arresting compositions on this debut EP mine equally curious territory. None to greater effect than "Crossing Lines," a short history of transportation which languorously unravels into fantasies of time travel.

-Dom Salemi

Bunny Brains: Sin Gulls (Goring St. Eddy) 1988-1998 (Menlo Park Recordings)

Stateside, American unpopular music buyers are turning their lonely eyes to, an art damage collective with the courage to describe their ungodly and decidedly non-commercial work as "mind numbing utter crap and noise." Which is not altogether true as most of the odds and sods culled here from singles and EPs released in the last decade are pretty rigidly constructed. What's more most of them rock. The way "Sister Ray" rocks; you know, a low-end rumble providing the grounding with shards of coruscating, distorted, vaguely melodic guitar noise layered o'er top.

Where the band part company with the Velvets is in the vocal department. The Brains yelp and intentionally sing off-key. Lou Reed never intentionally sang off key. That's because Reed was singing about important things. Bunny Brains refuse to sing about important things although they do have a song about sucking on a ding dong. It's very funny. As are most of the 17 cuts here. Not ha ha funny; more like the harsh croak of laughter. The sound the disillusioned make

railing against beauty.

-Dom Salemi

Cock Sparrer Live: Runnin' Riot Across The U.S.A. (TKO)

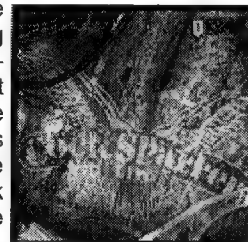
Some twenty-five years of soldiering and scores of releases and still not even a mention in the record guides. This for one of the more original British punk acts to arise from the ashes of Thatcherism.

They were Oi! before it became Oi-Vey and in the process helped put down the bricks and mortar for the harder-edged D.I.Y. combos that followed in their wake. Combos like Sham 69, the Angelic Upstarts and dozens more. You lot can atone for your sins by purchasing this document from their first and only U.S. tour. Eighteen of their better compositions, infectious, Cockney flavored, rough-hewn pieces with a touch of glam amidst the alcoholic music-hall sing-alongs, anthemic cries for boozy brotherhood, ripped odes to defiance and beery bash-em-ups. For the intellectual skinhead there is the sobering broadside, "Secret Army" and the eye-opening Liverpoolian poetics of "England Belongs To Me."

-Dom Salemi

John Hammond: Wicked Grin (Point Blank/Virgin)

For over 35 years, John Hammond, Jr., has been one of the more authentic white practitioners of Da Blooze, with his nasty vocalizing, guitar playing (especially acoustic), and harp skills all seemingly belying his upbringing as a white rich kid, and son of legendary Columbia A&R man John Hammond, who discovered and signed Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen, among others, to their first record contracts. There's really only been one knock against John Jr. — he's not a songwriter — instead, he's an interpreter of hundreds and hundreds of blues classics penned by others. His new release, "Wicked Grin", is the first time he's devoted an entire album to just one songwriter — in this case, Tom Waits. And it's a match made in Heaven. Waits' last LP, "Mule Variations", is the closest he's ever come to a straight blues album (never mind the Grammy he received for it as "Best Folk Album") — so this collaboration with Hammond appears to be a logical next step for him. As there are certain

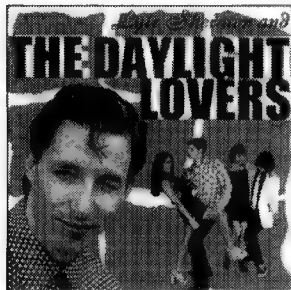


similarities between the voices and phrasing of the two — although Hammond's voice lacks a lot of the muscatel/sandpaper gurgling quality that Waits is so known and loved for — I was wondering how different Hammond's interpretations would sound. The result? On the one hand, Hammond clearly gets inside each of these songs and makes them his own vocally. On the other hand, this isn't a traditional John Hammond blues LP in terms of the musical arrangements — it sounds much more like Waits' band playing here than anything Hammond has ever done — no surprise, as Waits produced it. I'm sure they both had a ball making this record, and I hope they do another one (or three or four)! Special kudos to ex-Sir Douglas Quintet and Texas Tornado Augie Myers for his cool atmospheric keyboard playing throughout. One of the very best of 2001 so far.

-John Oliver

Daylight Lovers: Lyle Sheraton & The Daylight Lovers

(Sympathy For The Record Industry)



Produced by Jack Oblivion of The Oblivians and Compulsive Gamblers, this debut release by The Daylight Lovers is very noisy, trashy garage R&R, not unlike their producer's former bands. Sound-

wise, this Detroit-based three piece combo falls somewhere between The Oblivians, only with a lot more 50's R&R and rockabilly thrown into the mix at the expense of Memphis Soul, and the late and much lamented Devil Dogs from New York — very high energy stuff.

The CD's inner sleeve contains various pictures of the band playing live - it looks they enjoy their alcohol and taking their clothes off in concert. I also seem to recall a Maximum Rock & Roll review of one of this band's early 45's that stated it sounded like they had recorded the record inside a dumpster. That pretty much sums this one up as well. I like it!

-John Oliver

Electric Frankenstein: Annie's Grave (Victory)

Really, we try to be objective here at Casa Brutarian. You start labeling this band or that writer as the "greatest," what then? Where do you go from there? Still, we'd be hard pressed not to tell you if you asked that Electric Frankenstein is our choice for house band. Annie's Grave is about the three billionth release (the Franks are going for the record here, somebody ought to tell them

they broke it a long, long time ago) and we'll be God damned if it isn't as scintillating, as awe-inspiring, as sublimely sublime as everything else they've produced. But hey, don't

take our word for it; pick up this disc, or one of the other three billion and thrill to the joys of a band which has effortlessly absorbed all that The Ramones, Led Zep and KISS had to offer. Absorbed while watching every American and European horror film released up to 1968 and then, and only then, deemed themselves fit to strap on the guitars to spew their preternatural mix of punk and metal on an unsuspecting and undeserving world.

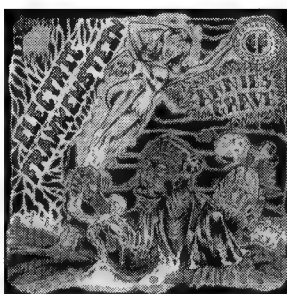
-Dom Salemi

Firestarter: Firestarter

(Mangrove; vinyl-only release in Japan)

One of my all-time favorite bands has to be Teengenerate, a quartet of Japanese reprobates who rose from the ashes of the American Soul Spiders to speed up, pulverize and just bash the Hell out of every song they ever played, as if it were their very last. Sadly, such bands usually burn out early, as was the case with Teengenerate. Their demise led to spin-off bands - notably The Raydios, led by lead guitarist/TG lead vocalist Fink and bassist Sammy, and The Tweezers, Fifi's band (rhythm guitars/backing vocals in TG). Each of these bands recorded one album — The Raydios' continuing in the punk rock tradition of Fink's previous bands, only at a less hectic pace (and much more cleanly recorded), and The Tweezers' in a power pop vein, along the lines of The Records, Chris Wilson-era Flamin' Groovies, etc., with Fifi now a front man. For whatever reason, Fink, Sammy and Fifi rejoined forces in 1999, as Firestarter. The result? I think they've successfully captured the best elements of both The Raydios and Tweezers, with a dose of Teengenerate tossed in. Fifi continues to be the front man in Firestarter, and he continues to write very catchy, hook-laden songs. His singing in Firestarter is much stronger than on the Tweezers CD, and Fink's writing contributions and powerful guitar work inject a huge dose of guts and R&R fury into the mix here. It's so very rare to see a punk band mature musically with results that I can stomach. They've succeeded in doing just that here. 13 originals and a cover of Eddie & The Hot Rods' "Do Anything You Wanna Do." Definitely one of the best releases of 2000....and sadly, not released in the U.S. (By the way, I'd like to personally thank my friends Valery Lovely and Brian Colantuno of Atlanta, GA, for getting me the tape of this LP for this review.)

-John Oliver



Half Japanese: Hello

(Alternative Tentacles)

Yes, these nuts are still going at it, some 23-24 years later....although they've lost a great deal of their quirky charm since Jad Fair hired a bunch of real musicians about 10 years ago. Actually, the current band — Jason Willett, Gilles Rieder and John Sluggert, is quite good — an extremely tight little combo that provides a great backdrop for Fair's forever-amateur night audition vocalizing and poetry reading and sometimes just screeching into his damn bullhorn. His singing nowadays isn't that far off from Lou Reed's - which I think he'd take as a compliment, knowing his serious longtime Velvet Underground Jones.

If you like ½ Japanese, you'll like this latest offering: the usual group of songs about love, hate, rejection, horror movie monsters, wrestling, and other objects of Mr. Fair's affections.



-John Oliver

Hellacopters: High Visibility

(Universal Records - Import)

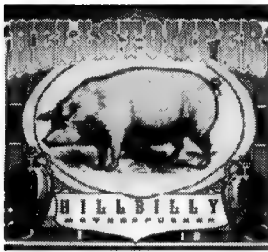
Now this is more like it! The last we saw of The Hellacopters, Sub-Pop had tried to turn them into an Aerosmith/Lynyrd Skynyrd-sounding generic "rock" band, through their blandly (and badly) produced "Grande Rock" album. This latest release returns the BIG sound to the band — close to their live sound. It also doesn't hurt that this is a better batch of songs than on "Grande Rock". The one thing, to me, that elevates The Hellacopters over most of the other Scandinavian bands of the past several years is the quality of their songwriting. In addition, in Nicke Royale (or whatever last name he's using now), they have a distinctive singer. Hot songs, hot singing and playing here — scorching! Listen to "Baby Borderline" for a quick example. A great Rock & Roll band at the top of their game.



-John Oliver

Hellstomper: Hillbilly Motherfucker (Man's Ruin)

Do I really need to review a CD called "Hillbilly Motherfucker"? Especially one with songs titled "Drunk In Alabama", "Sumbitch", "Cock Fightin' Saturday Nite", "Another God-damn Drinkin' Song", "Stank", or, of course,



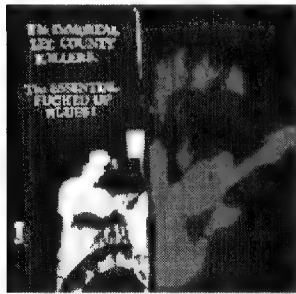
"Hillbilly Motherfucker"? It's on Man's Ruin, and it's endorsed and approved by the Confederacy of Scum, by God! I already knew what this sounded like before I took the wrap off

the CD — loud, fast, obnoxious, buzzsaw guitars, razor-blade garglin' yellin', etc. And it does contain all of the above... and I'm not all that crazy about it. They do a decent cover of Elvis' "Burning Love", but, on the other hand, no rasslin' songs — why not? File this with the Rancid Vat and Alabama Thunder Pussy CDs. Too many Southern bands like this, and not enough good ones (like Antiseen and Cocknoose).

-John Oliver

Immortal Lee County Killers: The Essential Fucked Up Blues (Estrus)

Did I mention bad Southern bands above? One of the absolute best ones was The Quadrajets from Alabama. Former Quadrajet leader Chet "the Cheetah" Weise recently formed



a two piece band with Doug "The Boss" Sherrard on drums, called the Immortal Lee County Killers. Much like other two piece (guitar & drums) combos, such

as the Flat Duo Jets, Bantam Rooster and the Soledad Brothers, this duo makes up for their lack of size with a HUGE sound... and not surprisingly, they sound like a stripped down, more focused Quadrajets to a large extent, with an emphasis on swamp music and the Blues. And we're not talking your standard 12 bar blues format here — the loud, distorted slide guitars, non-slide pentatonic guitar riffs, hollered vocals and 2-3 chord songs don't fit any sort of classical definition of blues music... but dammit, they don't sound like anything else! Kinda like a John Lee Hooker for the new millennium. Primitive Southern hoodoo honky trash music. Great music for listening to while drinking alone.

-John Oliver

Jet Boys: Ready Jet Go!

(IAM Records - Japanese import)

The Jet Boys from Japan put out a bunch of thrashy, lo-fi punk singles and 10 inchers back in the mid-90's. One of their two front men, bassist Joe Alcohol, quit the band several years ago to form Hong Kong Knife, a 50's/rockabilly-influenced four piece band

who have achieved some recent commercial success in Japan doing several television show theme songs (and whose latest record will be reviewed here next issue). The

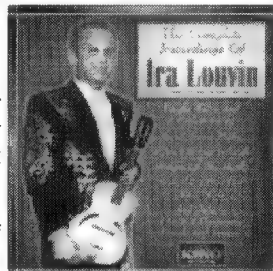


other main Jet Boy, Ono Ching (aka "Ass Man") has continued with the band, and they've put out two full-length CD's in the past two years, "Jumpin' Jet Flash" in 1998 and "Ready Jet Go!" in late 2000. As in the case of most Japanese punk bands, these guys just let it all hang out on their latest CD — 20 songs clocking in at around 40 minutes, plus a bonus cut: a cover of the Ramones' "Merry Xmas Baby (I Don't Wanna Fight)." No ballads or slow songs here - just one sonic blast after another. You can't begin to discern any of the lyrics, so it's academic as to what language Ono's singing in... although it sounds like it's English on both the bonus Ramones cover and their Kiss cover, "Rock & Roll All Night", as well as what appears to be a tribute to the Dead Boys, "Wild, Drive, Jail, Vacant" (Thanks to Valery Lovely for pointing that out!). There aren't too many old-time punk bands like this around anymore....and, no surprise, the Jet Boys' CDs aren't available in the US. (Try www.cdjapan.co.jp).

-Dom Salemi

Ira Louvin: The Complete Recordings (King)

This is the first time on CD for the solo recordings of C&W immortal Ira Louvin, one half of probably the greatest country duo act in history, the Louvin Brothers. The siblings split up in 1963 when Charlie Louvin finally had his fill (and then some) of his older brother Ira, whose general day-to-day disposition was often compared to a rattlesnake's. (NOTE: I also read where this comparison may have done a great disservice to reptiles everywhere!) Long before there were nasty British rockers wrecking hotel rooms and punk rockers starting fights, Ira Louvin was no-showing concerts, driving everywhere drunk, trying to burn the occasional studio down (while posing for the cover of the LP "Satan Is Real"), getting shot by one of his 4 wives (and carrying the bullets around in his back the remainder of his life), trying to strangle Elvis Presley for stating he loved "nigger music" (see Peter Guralnick's "Last Train to Memphis"), and just generally raising all sorts of hateful nastiness



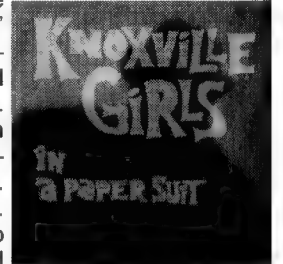
and Hell, until he was put out of his misery in a fatal car crash in 1965. Oh...and his one true regret in life was that he didn't become a preacher! Recorded in '63-'64, I don't think his solo material here really yielded any big hits (nor should there have been any big hits), but it's a gas anyway listening to him sing this stuff. His take on "Bottom of the Bottle", for instance, blows Porter Wagoner's version (and title track to his first of three Skid Row Joe drunken foolishness concept LP's) all to Hell and back. Other highlights — "Empty Wallet & A Broken Heart", "Who Threw Dat Rock?", and what I believe was a minor hit for Ira, "Yodel, Sweet Molly" (complete with some insane banshee yodeling her lungs out in the background). All in all, a truly great singer with, for the most part, mediocre material.

-John Oliver

Knoxville Girls: In A Paper Suit (In The Red)

Dese guys came stormin' outta New York a year or two ago like the world owed them a livin'.

Just because they had somethin' of a pedigree — Cramps, Bad Seeds, Gun Club. Which don't mean jack if ya don't produce the goods. Which they didn't. This time there's no resting on imagined



laurels; the band has upped the alcohol consumption, dropped all pretense and let their freak flag fly. So as to get that sepulchral voodoo-stomp swamp-blues rock thing going. Not too hard a thing to do when you've got this much talent going for ya and ya look to the likes of Jelly Roll Morton, Hasil Adkins, Hank Williams covers for inspiration. So, Girls, you're forgiven for the less than impressive outing in your first appearance in the Big Show.

-Dom Salemi

Los Straitjackets: Damas Y Caballeros (Yep Roc)

Don't ask us why the four members of Los Straitjackets wear Mexican wrestling masks. They certainly don't play Mariachi music. They do speak Mexican however. Yes, they do. Introduce each song on this scintillating live recording with it. Damn fine songs too. Hot 50s and 60s intros bringing to mind the likes of Duane Eddy, Dick Dale and everybody else who was good. That's "bring to mind" which means utilizing as a starting point not slavishly imitating. Not even on the Link Wray and Santo & Johnny covers. Los Jackets, you see, don't need to imitate, recreate or pontificate; they're too full of wit and inventiveness and what our friends south of the border call "Yo no se que-

sadilla." And humor too, check out the quartet's Joe-Meek-inspired, astrowordly take on the bathetic "Love Theme From The Titanic." Ay yi yi yi.

-Dom Salemi

Roger McGuinn: McGuinn's Folk Den Vols. 1-4 (MP3.com)

For those of you who long for the old jingle jangle sound of The Byrds, this is about as close as you're gonna get nowadays.



Roger McGuinn has recorded four full-length CDs to date of old traditional folk songs, and they're available via mail order (or downloading, I guess) through www.mp3.com. Included among

the folk songs are Irish drinking songs ("Whisky In the Jar"), boating/pirate songs, western cowboy ditties ("Home on the Range"), and other white folks' music, along with a field holler or two. McGuinn used to pull out an old chestnut or two like this on every Byrds album, as well as his solo releases over the years. It's mostly just Roger and his acoustic 12 string, but I'm pretty sure he also uses his live "band" (2 other guitarists/singers) on these, and I also hear his old 12 string Rickenbacker on several cuts. A word of caution: the sound of these mp3 disks is allegedly not up to snuff compared to commercial releases, but these particular CD's, recorded in McGuinn's living room with just a mike or two, sound just fine. And I understand more CDs in this series are on the way. I'll listen to his version of "The Star Spangled Banner" (with all three verses) over anybody else's any day! (Well, I do like the Hendrix instrumental version....and there's Leslie Nielsen's in "The Naked Gun"...)

-John Oliver

Ozzfest: Second Stage Live (Priority)

The only thing we can think of that's heavier than an Ozzfest disc is a double Ozzfest disc. Which is what we've got here: one disc of new stuff from last year's festival and the re-issue of the long out-of-print original debut featuring Slayer, Sepultura and other hot numbers. The new CD has a lot of metalcore selections which, as near as we can figure out, is a mix of the thudding guitars and glowering chords one associates with metal only sped-up a bit (sometimes quite a bit), hoarse sing-shout vocalizing and techno spiffery (except for Queens of the Stone Age who sound like the MC5 and so are the best thing here aside from Ozzy). It's very weighty and recommended for play especially if you're really in a bad mood or it's

one of those days when people all about you are losing their heads and blaming it on your naughty heavy self. Or you're 16.

-Dom Salemi

The Morells: The Morells (Slewfoot Records)

D. Clinton Thompson and Lou Whitney have been playing together in various bands based in Springfield, Missouri, for about 25 years at this point - notably The Symptoms, The Skeletons and The Morells. The latter two of these bands have broken up and reformed several times. The Morells' last LP was recorded in 1982 ("Shake and Push" on Borrowed Records), so it's taken 19 years to do the follow-up. In the meantime, Thompson and Whitney and their usual gang (Joe Terry on keyboards, Ron Grempe and several others on drums) have recorded a ton of material as The Skeletons (with full-lengths "In The Flesh" in '91, "Waiting" in '92 and "Nothing To Lose" in '97), and they served as backing bands for, among others, Robbie Fulks, Syd Straw, Scott Kempner of The Dictators (on his solo LP "Tenement Angels"), Rudy Grayzell and Boxcar Willie (on his rockabilly LP, "Rocky Box"). Bassist Lou Whitney has produced dozens of albums, by all of the above and then some (including Kempner's Del Lords). And they've played tons and tons of gigs everywhere throughout the Midwest - they're basically the NRBQ of that neck of the woods. Roots rockers of the highest order, with encyclopedic knowledge of all sorts of obscure music, their records are always fun to listen to - and their latest release, "The Morells", is no exception. (As best I can tell, these guys record as The Morells when they want to dip back into their bag of 50's obscurities. The Skeletons are a little more modern - they sound more like a classic 60's band, having covered tunes by Sonny Bono, The Easy-

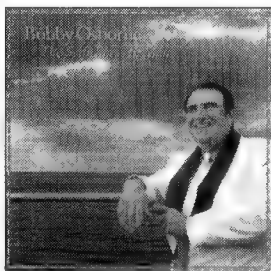
beats, Waylon Jennings and Little Jimmy Dickens, among others, in the past.) On this latest offering, they resurrect a couple of chestnuts by Springfield, Mo.'s own rockabilly legend Ronnie Self ("Hair Of The Dog", "Home In My Hand"), do several extremely obscure blues/rockabilly covers, along with originals that sound like 50's tunes, and, as usual, have room for one of Whitney's goofy self-penned C&W numbers ("Don't Let Your Baby Buy A Car" - before they play C&W numbers live, Whitney puts on an oversized cowboy hat, I'm told - he sez it gives the folks a warning, in case they want to hit the bathroom). The Morells and The Skeletons are both national treasures - buy their goddamn records!

-John Oliver



Bobby Osborne: The Selfishness In Man (OMS Records)

What we have here is one of the all-time legends in Bluegrass music, singer/mandolinist Bobby Osborne of The Osborne Brothers, cutting a straight C&W album, in which he covers songs by

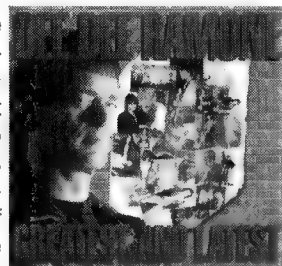


Buck Owens, George Jones, Lefty Frizzell, Marty Robbins, Ray Price, and others. An interesting experiment, or so it seems. My initial reaction to this CD was - My God - what a set of pipes this old coot has! He's always had one of the best high tenor Bluegrass voices, with few peers (the late Bill Monroe obviously comes to mind), and, based on this offering, he also clearly would have been an all-time immortal as a country singer as well. My only complaint - I'm too familiar with much of the material he chooses to cover (Owens' "Act Naturally", Jones' "A Girl I Used to Know", Price's "I'll Be There"), but even then, it's interesting listening to these old chestnuts as filtered through Bobby O.'s voice.

-John Oliver

Dee Dee Ramone: Greatest & Latest (Japanese Import)

The parting of the ways between The Ramones and bassist/junkie/1-2-3-4-er supreme Doug Colvin (better known as Dee Dee Ramone) signaled the beginning of the end for what was surely the best of the American punk bands from the late 70's. Truth be known, the band's recorded output had already started going downhill from the time producer/drummer Tommy Erdelyi left, to be replaced by Marc Bell. Dee Dee's departure robbed them of 1/2 their songwriting expertise, plus, it seems, most of their guts, especially as a live band. Once departed, Dee Dee seemed to drift aimlessly, first recording a pseudo-rap album under the nom de plume, "Dee Dee King", then putting out a series of Ramonesy-like punk albums of varying quality on mostly import labels. He also played for a short time with G.G. Allin (who, rumor has it, proved too bizarre for even Dee Dee), and penned the vitriolic autobiographical "Poison Heart", a short treatise on two subjects - drugs and why he couldn't stand the rest of the Ramones. The



new album? It's mostly remakes of old Ramones classics, only sung by Dee Dee this time around. No, he doesn't sing as well as Joey...but there's a certain exuberance here that was missing from the last few Ramones albums. He also tosses in a cover of producer and Brit guitar ace Chris Spedding's UK hit, "Motorbiking", as well as a great but bizarre remake of the Everly Brothers' "Cathy's Clown" (!?). Unlike on his last LP, "Hop Around", Dee Dee's wife Barbara's vocals are, thankfully, kept to a minimum. All in all, perhaps Dee Dee's most enjoyable solo outing to date. If you loved the Ramones, well worth having. It'll do until Joey's long-awaited solo CD comes out or, better yet, the Ramones' first reunion tour.

-John Oliver

Rancid: Rancid (Hellcat)

I'll give Rancid credit for one thing: in the face of cries of "sell-out" regarding their relative commercial success with "Out Come The Wolves" and "Life Won't Wait", they respond with this nuclear bomb of a CD. No ska, no reggae, no slow songs here — just 22 sonic

blasts checking in at under 40 minutes. It starts fairly slowly, with, in my opinion, the worst songs leading off the record... then it builds and builds like a well-oiled punk rock steamroller that takes no prisoners. Maybe the Clash comparisons aren't that far off; after all, Strummer/Jones/etc., never made two albums that sounded alike. It appears Rancid doesn't either. You like loud, noisy, snotty punk rock? Buy this.

-John Oliver

Various Artists: Groovin' Around the World: A Tribute to The Flamin' Groovies (Safety Pin Records, Spanish import)

A tribute album way long overdue, and a damn good one, at that! The songs are split between the Roy Loney-era version and the Chris Wilson version of the band on about a 60/40 ratio, and the bands are likewise split between Spanish/Australian and American, although, for some reason, Kike & co. left out basic info about the bands. Most of the takes on these classic songs are fairly faithful to the originals, with some special kudos to: Detroit's Trash Brats ("Have You Seen My Baby"), Spain's Los Protones (a rockin' "Don't Put Me On"), LA's Doorslammer (their "Shake Some Action" could be mistaken for a Groovies' outtake!), The Panadolls' (from

Australia? — "In The USA"), Bummer (from ? — "Love Have Mercy") and Seattle's Young Fresh Fellows ("Golden Clouds"). An aside to The Streetwalkin' Cheetahs - you really DO need that slide for "Slow Death" - it doesn't work without it! Other bands who turn in great jobs - Jerry Spider Gang, DC's own Adam West, Big Bad Johns, The Fastbacks, and The Quadrajets. I assume that's Kike (Turmix) bellowing out the vocals on "Teenage Head" for the Safety Pin All Stars? Not available in the US - order through Safety Pin records.

-John Oliver

Billy Syndrome: Now (Slut Fish)

Oh! the auto-didacts. They toil and they sweat, unaware that it availeth them naught as there is nothing new under the sun and therefore the fruit of their labor is mere vanity of vanities and vexation of spirit! Yet when a full-grown badly bearded man comes as child, offering as gift a work in which he seeketh to mock various genres of song whilst not in possession of songcraft which would successfully and convincingly allow him to do so, what then? Do we turn our eyes to heaven and ask God whether something this crooked should be spurned and mocked because it cannot be made straight? Verily, I say unto you that we celebrate the idiocies of this demented Brooklyn hillbilly as there is nothing better than men should rejoice in work so bad that by its very badness it takes on a large portion of goodness. So huzzah to the synthesized astro funk of "Deep Mountain Fuck" and "Better Place." Let our cries come unto him for the dada deep space divertissements "21st Century Blues" and "Dogs and Cats." Hosannahs to "Did U Die Or Wind Up In Jail" and "Ugly Factory" which would rock if not prevented by the mental infirmities of the performers from doing so. Give ear, then, to Billy Syndrome and when done file next to your Wild Man Fischer albums.

-Dom Salemi

Southern Culture On The Skids: Liquored Up And Lacquered Down

Sometime you can be too clever by half. Such is the case with the cult trash 'n' roots rock band, Southern Culture on the Skids. Sure they've got a clever way with a rhyme. Got their obscure cornpone and culinary references down cold. In fact, everything from the look down to the sound is letter perfect. And that spells C-A-L-C-U-L-A-T-I-O-N not I-N-S-P-I-R-A-T-I-O-N. Let's put it another way. Where The Cramps have you believing that they'd sell their soul to the devil for a heretofore lost Sonny Burgess tune, Southern Culture, on the other hand, gives the impression that they'd call in a lawyer first to

read the fine print on the contract before cutting any deal. That being said, we'd be remiss in failing to note that the listener will be hard pressed not to find cuts like the

title cut, a wicked mariachi and "Drunk and Lonesome (Again)," a honky-tonk send up, abso-fucking-lutely charming. Also likely to impress is the Booker T. tribute, "Pass The Hatchet," the Chuck-Berry-by-way-of -The-Rolling-Stones, "King Of The Mountain" and the Hollyesque, "Over It."

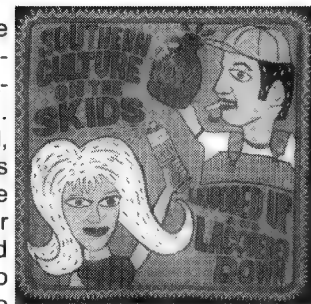
-Dom Salemi

Thee Michelle Gun Elephant Gear Blues (Alive); Rumble; Casanova Snake; TMGE 106; Casanova Said "Live or Die"

(last four on Columbia Triad import label)

Thee Michelle Gun Elephant (great name! — supposedly based on their manager's pronunciation of their favorite Damned LP, "Machine Gun Etiquette", with the "Thee" tossed in as a tribute to Billy Childish and his dozens of bands — Thee Headcoats, Thee Headcoatees, etc.) is one of Japan's latest entries in the Rock & Roll juggernaut sweepstakes. Their sound? Part Link Wray, part Who, a lot of Mick Green & The Pirates, part Blue Cheer, part Guitar Wolf, part 70's English pub rock ala Dr. Feelgood, and in total, an original rock & roll sound unlike anything you've ever heard. They are comprised of crazed singer Chiba Yusuke, who writes and sings most of his lyrics in Japanese (...not that anybody can really make out the lyrics anyway), a

hard driving precision machine of a rhythm section, and guitarist Futoshi Abe, whose endlessly inventive riffing and power chording makes me seriously wonder if Mick Green fathered any bastard children in Japan during any of the 70's Pirates' tours over there. Their songs are hook-laden yet



intense and powerful as Hell, and they're just a great rock & roll band that appears to be at the very top of their game. To add icing to the cake, they look cool as Hell, too! "Gear Blues", their first full-length release in the US, is actually their fourth album, having been released in Japan in 1998. Since then, the singles compilation "Rumble" was released in 1999, and three albums came out in 2000: a new studio album, "Casanova Snake", which I personally think is their best ever; "TMGE 106", a greatest hits album; and "Casanova Said 'Live Or Die'", a live LP taken from their tour of Japan in support of "Casanova Snake". Any of these albums are great introductions to the band, although I do not recommend the live CD, due to its sound quality (I have heard better sounding bootlegs from the 70's than this show, which sounds like an audience recording from the back of the arena). Buy 'em all (although you're not likely to find any of these other than "Gear Blues" in this country; try www.cdjapan.co.jp). (Ed. Note: I just learned that TMGE have recorded a single with Mick Green. Not surprising in the least.)

-John Oliver

BQ

Dom Salemi and John Oliver don't always get stuck doing all the music reviews themselves, but sometimes everyone else bails on them. Read about these staffers at: www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/staff.htm

MEANWHILE...DOWN AT THE DOLLARAMA...



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The Best American Erotica 2001

Edited by Susie Bright
(2001, Simon & Schuster)

Fetish

Edited by John Yau
(1998, Four Walls Eight Windows)

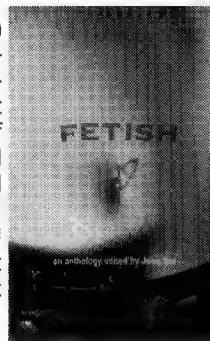
Most would agree that the *Symposium* is the West's first philosophical discussion of "the great and glorious god, Love," which had many followers but supposedly few encomiasts back in ancient times. The task at hand, on that sultry night long ago, when Socrates and the boys were recovering from too much boozing, was to give a speech praising love, sex, and friendship. I only mention this famous document because I wouldn't want the *Brutarian* readership to think that I was a vulgar smut peddler who took anything but the most intellectual interest in love, Greek or otherwise. In fact, I might not have written about Eros at all considering how busy I've been re-searching the material for a scholarly article – a Derridean analysis of Tourettes syndrome –

except I had to drop a friend off at the train station, in the City of Brotherly Love where I live; it was there, in one of those highly respected travel bookstores, tucked discreetly away between the magazine rack and the self-help section, that I stumbled across a vast offering of soft porn titles, among them Susie Bright's *Best American Erotica 2001* and John Yau's *Fetish*. I mentioned my discovery to editor extraordinaire, Dom Salemi, and he gave me his blessings to have a go at it.

Now, as recently as the last issue, an ungrateful *Brutarian* staff writer griped that Mr. Salemi has begun to chaff at all the indecent sex talk going on in between the sheets of this magazine. I have no desire to drag his good name through the muck and, besides, I have my own reputation as an uptight, academic snob to worry about. So it occurred to me that, if I was going to review pornography, I could protect my image by dropping names, and not just Plato, but also the name of Gilles Deleuze, co-author of *Anti-Oedipus*, and one of the promoters of a philosophical *art brut* movement that raised more than a few eyebrows in post-1965 France.

He also had a lot to contribute to how we think about erotic literature. It was Deleuze who stated, in his exquisitely beautiful essay on the Marquis de Sade and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, that their writing should not be called pornography: "it merits the more exalted title of 'pornology'" because each of these writers has something essential to say about language, sexuality, and civilization. Both Sade and Masoch drew on all of the historical and cultural forces at work in their lifetimes – Sade on the Enlightenment, Masoch on Romanticism – to show us that erotic literature "is able to act as a mirror to the world by reflecting its excesses, drawing out its violence and even conferring a 'spiritual' quality on these phenomenon." In contrast, pornography reduces literature to "a few imperatives (do this, do that) followed by obscene descriptions."

Some among you will no doubt be delighted to hear that there are plenty of obscene descriptions in the latest Susie Bright's *Best American Erotica* series, which dates back to 1993, and very little that merits the exalted title of pornology. Bright isn't so much a pornologist as a sexpert: a combination of a cheerleader and therapist who has made it her mission to improve the lives of the sexually repressed everywhere. This is an admirable cause but the trouble with Susie is that, as cutting edge she says she is, she goes looking for her erotica in all the usual stereotypical places. Most of the stories are straightforward narratives of the rudimentary "do this, do that" variety without even so much as a trope – a metaphor, a synecdoche – to liven things up. The sex



isn't all that inventive either, though Ginu Kamani's "Waxing the Thing" and Nathan Englander's "Peep Show" are worth reading. I also liked the idea behind Dodie Bellamy's "Spew Forth," a transparent parody of satanic cults but funny.

The stories John Yau collected for his *Fetish* anthology are better written, they just aren't very pleasurable to read, nor are they meant to be: they are meant to be serious statements about the dark reality of our desires. Even Freud's concept of fetishism was more light-hearted than the grim fixations enacted in these creepy tales, which leave almost no space for excess or humor or frivolity. But what I find truly perplexing, not to mention disappointing, about many of these narratives is the unwillingness or inability to introduce us to intelligent, articulate characters who understand that the interplay between bodies and words, signs and urges, should elicit something more interesting than "this happened, that happened." For characters that are supposed to represent the sexually adventurous among us, they are strangely non-communicative and unresponsive. It's as though sex, instead of making them feel more, makes them feel less, as is the case in Marci Blackman's "The Choke-cherry Tree" in which the narrator begs her lover to hurt her because it's her only way of "beating back the numbness."

This generalized lack of expressiveness can no doubt be traced back to social causes – the malaise of an artificially stimulated society or the shallowness of mass culture or the transience of modern life. But the taboo against expression also has specifically literary origins since it is a reaction to, and a rejection of, the enthusiasm for commentary found in the 19th century novel. In Charles Bukowski's "Love for \$17.50," for example, the protagonist gets it on with a mannequin precisely because he doesn't have to lie in bed "and listen to her talk." Here is a perfect illustration of a narrator devoid of any complex subjectivity, who doesn't want us to know what motivates him, and whose point of view is entirely circumscribed to the visible and obvious. The fact that this makes for damn boring reading is a good indication that it's time to start generating some new ideas.

Perhaps we could begin in a modest way, by simply asking whether American erotica has to be so intellectually bankrupt – especially when there is Sade, Masoch, and so many other interesting and educated sexual deviants to learn from – because, let's face it, even when it comes to pornography, a mind is a terrible thing to waste.

—Kathryn A. Kopple

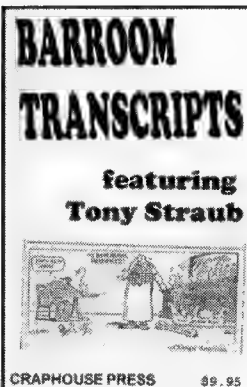
Barroom Transcripts

(featuring Tony Straub)

Compiled by Rich Stewart

(1999, Craphouse Press)

Sitting here in front of a dilapidated computer (got it for free and it acts like it), drinking a warm Milwaukee's Best Light, contem-



plating the broken glass left over from when my next door neighbor's wife hurled various and sundry family possessions through their front window at two AM this morning, and Dom sends me an email wanting a review of this book posthaste. Okay, Dom, here's your %\$#^&*^ review.

My first thought is a chilling one: We are, all of us, far closer to this than we'd care to believe.

Tony Straub is a more or less homeless guy, about half nuts, and Rich just kinda moved on into his life, set a recorder on the table at the bar, and then basically ordered another beer and engaged Tony and his acquaintances in the kind of light and seemingly meaningless conversations that are regularly played out in a million bars, ever day of every year... seemingly meaningless... hmm.

Cab just dropped somebody off next door. Could it be Debby? Frankie split with all his stuff about an hour ago and his father Frank (my landlord) asked me to keep an eye on the place.

Oh fuck. Crash! Bang! Excuse me while I call Frank and advise him that the shit's on, okay?

Oh fuck. Frank and his wife just arrived and Debby won't open up. She's drinking. Okay. Frank's at the door.

Frank and his wife are leaving. Frank wants me to call the cops if I hear any more crashing or banging. I told him I would. Does that make me a snitch? Dunno. Don't wanna see the place get trashed though, and neither do I want to see Debby hurt herself.

Well fuck, Debby's breaking glass and I've gotta call the cops. Stand by.

Cops called. Can I get back to this review? Maybe.

Lessee here, where were we?

Oh yeah, Tony Straub.

Tony lives in the Belly Of The Beast, out on the streets for the most part, sometimes in the psych ward. Has a soft spot for whores, whom he regularly puts up in his apartment (when he actually has one now and again), and whom regularly bring by weird friends who steal shit, give them crack cocaine, and generally fuck up themselves and everyone else around them.

The book is a series of little one to three page "stories" that Tony tells. All kinda weird stuff. Hard to explain, really. Tony has lived life from the shithole end of things for so long, that he takes it all as blithely as you or I might take a crescent moon hanging in an evening sky. Tony and his friends (some nuts, some just hopeless drunken losers) career through a life littered with broken quart bottles of cheap beer, cigarette butts, grimy clothes, and god knows what else you might find up under a bridge on a cold Pennsylvania night.

Uh, oh. Debby's on the phone next door

and she's just HOLLERING! Where's the goddamn cops?

More broken glass flying across the street! Whoo, another one! God I hope she doesn't hurt herself.

Fuck this shit! I'm going next door to check on her.

Okay. Just like I figured. Cut herself up, smashing the windows. Got her sorta cleaned up. She wouldn't stay, back next door.

More crashing. JESUS!

Okay, went outside and Frank was at A1A, flagging down the sheriff. Told him I'd taken her to my place and cleaned up the blood. Frank's response was, "I wish she'd just end it for once and for all." Nice. She might be fucked up in the head, but suicide is something I don't really abide by.

All of these people are completely fucked up. Assholes. Idiots.

Cop's here, talking to Frank. Outside. Debby's still inside. Whup. Debby's arguing with the cop from the doorway and the cop's threatening "bracelets." Debby's decided to forego the bracelets and is back inside.

More threats between the cop and Debby. Still no bracelets, but we're awfully close.

Another unit has arrived.

Ding. The microwave just wrapped up. Need to go and finish off preparing my meal.

Um. Chicken's just right. Now the rice cooked in chicken broth, while the succotash gets miked.

Frank split. Two cops inside with Debby.

Whup. Frank's back and so's Frankie. Got a real clambake going inside the house with Debby and the cops. I'm gonna wrap this up, even though it's not over.

Is anything EVER over?

Seemingly meaningless.

We are, all of us, far closer to this than we'd care to believe.

Ok, Dom, here's your @\$%&*^% re-view!

Epilogue: We're now under a severe thunderstorm watch and the ocean is in a rage under a leaden, scud-filled sky. Nice touch, eh?

-James MacLaren

Rule by Secrecy

Jim Marrs

(2000, Harper Collins)

This book changes your outlook. It shifts your take on things from blank stares to nods of recognition. Before reading this book I wondered along with most people what the hell was going on with the world. How come we can't stop wars, feed the hungry, and pay off national debts? After reading it I can see a lot of it coming before it's reported and can even predict things as outrageous as electoral coups sanctioned by the Supreme Court and a sudden, seemingly magical downturn in world economy.

It all makes sense if you know where and how to look.

Subtitled *The Hidden History That Connects the Trilateral Commission, the Freemasons, and the Great Pyramids*, *Rule by Secrecy* covers much more ground than mere

conspiracy theory. In fact, parts of it, such as the chapters on international banking, read like a primer for a career in business and high finance. Marrs researches deeply to bring back the most important facts and faces that have shaped the world we live in from behind the scenes. He offers sources for those who would dig deeper.

Some of the names, such as Bush, are familiar to us. They may even surprise us. Others remain obscure even after we're introduced, dark figures in a shadowy history. Combined, the personalities who made our world and seem to run it are fascinating, repellent, and dangerous to one's peace of mind.

And make no mistake, we're talking about people who influence the course of nations for power and profit. Marrs traces the lines of power from historical roots to current branches and along the way reveals both connections among them and distinctions. Why, for example, do right wing think tanks fund left wing protests? That's but one can of worms Marrs has dared to open.

He explains why the U.S.A. uses money that says Federal on it but comes from a privately-owned bank. He tells us how come that private bank is owned and operated by citizens of other countries. He details how the boom-and-bust cycle followed so slavishly by the stock market allows property to be built up, then devalued so it can be grabbed cheap by the ultra-rich to enhance their already highly-concentrated wealth and power.

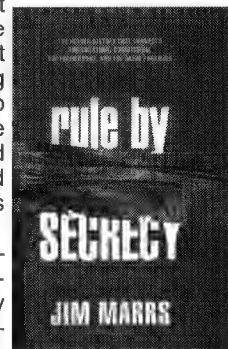
Beginning with an overview of the conspiratorial view of history — which simply challenges the notion that it's all been one long chain of lucky accidents — Marrs moves us systematically through organizations and families; fraternities and good old boy networks; coups and cartels; to today's multi-national corporations and globe-spanning market accounts.

At the same time, he delves into some of the hair-raising belief systems at work among these shadowy figures.

Here's where the Giza Pyramids come into play, for example. Rosicrucians, Masonic plots, and the Knights Templar do the dirty boogie with Cabalists, Popes, and ancient astronauts at a party to end all millennia. We learn how global myths relate to modern belief systems, and why the New Age flakes are only echoing deeper codes they barely understand.

A key concept in this book, and in the world around us, is debt manipulation. A debt means power. A debt means chances to move in and take over. Debt manipulation, or loaning for interest, provides so many kinds of leverage that it has indeed moved the world, and no need for Archimedes and his fulcrum, either.

Think about the archetypal mob Godfather, as portrayed by Marlon Brando so vividly. Owing him a favor,



or going into debt, gives him power over you. Being in his debt lets him control you.

That's exactly how it works among nations, too.

So who's holding the markers? In most cases, private banking houses beholden to no one, loyal to no particular nation or creed, a world unto themselves.

War is shown to be a highly profitable game of Risk, with no risk to investors, who profit from both sides with armament sales, shifts of labor forces, and reconstruction.

Marrs covers so much ground in this book so adroitly that it leaves other such books in the dust. Consider his section titles: Modern Secret Societies, The Fingerprints of Conspiracy, Rebellion and Revolution, Elder Secret Societies, and Ancient Mysteries. We begin in conspiracy's shadow, wind our way through history and big business, and end in myth's glow.

That some folks seem to believe the ancient astronaut take on history is important, too. Such beliefs simmer in the heart of many of the secret societies to which many very important people belong, but publicly and in the deniable realm. Marrs shows that world myths support the notion of visitors from elsewhere, inexplicable changes in mankind, and a prehistoric high-tech war that left us perhaps abandoned to larger concerns in other worlds. That such views were shared by the likes of Hitler, who wanted to concentrate the dregs of ET blood in order to bring back our cosmic masters in a kind of warped animal husbandry, hardly matters. The fact is, strange goals and appalling dreams may motivate many of the world's most powerful people.

Doesn't it make sense to find out what they're hiding? It affects every one of us, and knowing about it can only help us start to make clearer decisions in our lives.

So, as the prologue advises, if you're content with your world view and happy not to know, stay the hell away from this book.

The cover of *Rule by Secrecy*, by the way, is black, with neon orange and white lettering, and the cover art is simple: A slash of duct tape wrapped around the book, to keep it shut, presumably as it's hauled to that evening's rally and bonfire.

Read it before it's snatched and burned.

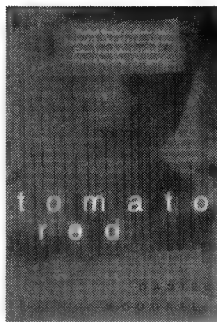
—Gene Stewart

Tomato Red

Daniel Woodrell

(2000, Plume)

This short, hard-hitting novel made many influential best-of-year lists but still left the author relatively unknown outside the mystery genre. A shame really as this compone Chandler pens highly readable books chock full of witty repartee, unforgettable characters and prose just crackling with energy and inventiveness. That doesn't always leave much room for story. Sometimes, though, just listening to and watching the people shambling about the pages is enough. As is the case here with the hopelessly unemployable Sammy Barlach as the people he meets up with. Let's start with Sammy. He's a loser. A real loser. An unrepentant alcoholic, too. But he has a way of looking at



in the Ozarks"), while busting into some rich geezer's house, Sammy convinces himself he's found kindred spirits. Which takes a great act of self-delusion on Sammy's part as Jamalee and Jason, despite living in a run-down shack on the wrong side of the tracks, parade about as if they were the spiritual and material descendants of Nick and Nora Charles. Throw in mutual self-destructive streaks a mile wide and you've got a recipe for disaster. Sammy's charmed by all this; he knows something about self-destructiveness, having served a bit of time in the state pen. So Sammy sticks around - having Jamalee and Jason's lovely and loose-moraled mother living next door helps as a convincer — figuring he can help set things right for his newfound "family." Well, the Ozarks ain't Oz, so the only breaks to be had here will be bad ones. Bad going to worse. Ending with murder. Couldn't be any other way 'cause this is the way things shake out in the world of noir. White trash division or no.

—Dom Salemi

Under The Skin

Michel Faber

(2000, Harcourt)

It certainly is nothing less than a dog's life for little Isserley. Every morning up she is at the break of dawn forcing herself into an outfit that barely fits and then stumbling into a battered red Toyota Corolla. And then its on to work. An unusual line of work: cruising the Scottish Highland looking for men hitchhiking. Men. Not boys. And not just any man. No, for Isserley the man must be muscular and yet somewhat fleshy.

He must have something to say, too. Something out of the ordinary. Something that doesn't remind Isserley of television. If the hitchhiker fits the bill then Isserley takes him to her house. A house which is anything but a home. Michel Faber's debut novel is a subtly searing indictment of the savagery and immorality beating in the guts of all of us.

—Dom Salemi

Moonchild

Aleister Crowley, 1917/1996

Samuel Weiser

Aleister Crowley, self-professed "wickedest man in the world" and practitioner

of Magick, wrote reams of bad poetry and if *Moonchild* is not atypical, many equally bad novels. This work is perhaps the most well known detailing as it does the minutiae involved in both white and black magick ceremonies as well as providing the most lucid explanation of theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the occult arts. Nevertheless, Lamia is a howler, the verbal equivalent of a Ken Russell movie; it teams with fustian language, absurd figures and cack-handed dialogue. The story centers on a Wildean character named Gray — clearly a stalking horse for Crowley — and his attempts with the magisterial magician Count Iff to create a goodly new world order.

Toward this end, a lovely young woman is found, allowed to fall in love with Gray and then spirited toward Naples and a castle where she is impregnated by Gray and schooled in the ways of the Moon. Seeking to thwart this operation is a depraved man named Douglas, a black necromancer with all the powers of the dark ones at his command. Would that Crowley had the English language and the niceties of plot at his command. Hilarity nevertheless abounds as is often the case when the absurd relentlessly and resolutely courts the vulgar.

—Dom Salemi



Haikus For Jews: For You, A Little Wisdom

David Bader

(1999, Harmony Books)



Haikus for Hebrews,
Some are funny, most
are not,
And the book's so small!

Eleven Dollars,
One hundred and nine
pages,
This is no bargain!

No discount offered,
And not a coupon inside,
Oy, my aching back!

—Yonkel Horowitz

BQ

A lot of folks contributed to Brutarian Library this issue. If we printed all their names, we'd run over to the next page, which would muck up Bruno's very amusing comic. Instead, we refer you to www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/staff where you can click on staff member names or click through to the Contributors page and find any other names.

THOUGH NOT AS EGREGIOUS AS THE MUSIC INDUSTRY OR THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, PORNOGRAPHY IS PLAGUED WITH LOWLIFES AND SWINDLERS READY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR TRUSTING NATURE AND MAKE A QUICK BUCK! YOU MAY NOT WANT TO BELIEVE THAT SUCH A SEEMINGLY NOBLE PROFESSION AS THE PRODUCTION OF JERK-OFF MATERIAL COULD ATTRACT SUCH PREDATORY SHYSTERS, BUT IT'S THE TRUTH! SO, IN THE SPIRIT OF SELF-PROTECTION, WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING TIPS TO BEING A....

PRUDENT PERVERT

(AFTER ALL, YOU'RE THE ONE NOT GETTING SCREWED-LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY!)

DICK SCABBY

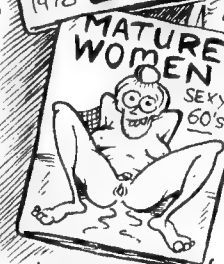


THE TRIPLE THREAT:

HOW CAN YOU GO WRONG? Three MAGS, SHRINK-WRAP'D TOGETHER, FOR ONE RIDICULOUSLY LOW PRICE! OF COURSE, YOU CAN'T SEE WHAT'S INSIDE, BUT PORN IS PORN, RIGHT? BIG MISTAKE, BUDDY! ONCE YOU GET HOME AND OPEN YOUR "PRIZE" YOU'LL REALIZE WHAT A SCHMUCK YOU ARE!!!



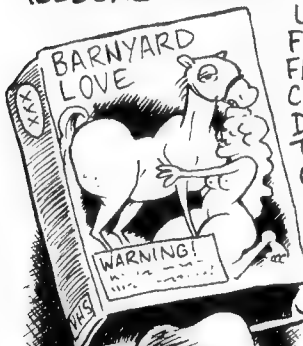
THIS IS A CLASSIC SCHEME FOR PUBLISHERS TO CLEAR THEIR WAREHOUSES OF WORTHLESS PRODUCT-- AT YOUR EXPENSE!



SWINGER'S DIRECTORIES CHOCK-FULL OF GRAINY PHOTOS OF FLACCID DICKS, SKANKY HIPPIES & FLABBY HOUSEWIVES! AND IT GETS WORSE FROM THERE! YOU'D JERK OFF TO PICS OF YOUR OWN MOM BEFORE YOU'D RESORT TO THIS CRAP!

"ILLEGAL" PORN:

THE OLDEST TRICK IN THE BOOK! AND RUBES LIKE YOU KEEP FALLIN' FOR IT! THESE TAPES FLAUNT THEIR SUPPOSED CRIMINAL STATUS & DECEIVE YOU INTO THINKING THAT YOU'RE GETTING YOUR HANDS ON SOME FORBIDDEN NASTY STUFF! BUT IT'S ALL A CHEAP PLOY! A DEAD GIVE-AWAY: THE PHONY 'WARNING' LABEL!



B-BUT LOOK AT THE PICTURE! SHE'S GONNA GET IT ON WITH A HORSE!



WISE UP, WOULD'JA! YOU'LL BE LUCKY IF YA WIND UP WITH A TAPE OF TWO JUNKIES SCHTUPPIN' IN A BARN! YOU WANNA SEE THE REAL DEAL YA GOTTA HEAD TO SOME COUNTRY THAT'S REALLY IN THE GUTTER- LIKE MEXICO! OR GERMANY!



GEE, I'VE GOT A LOT TO LEARN, MR. SCABBY! THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP!



FROM NOW ON I'LL STICK TO THE GOOD STUFF! LIKE THIS! LOOK! REAL VIRGINS!



SURGE ENGINE

by David Fitzpatrick

Been getting a lot of great feedback about the first two installments of Surge Engine, which is good. The overwhelming majority, however, say pretty much the same thing: "Review more sites!" Well, the problem with print media is that we're limited by a finite amount of space, and unless our readers don't mind paying fifteen bucks a copy, things have to have limits. But a compromise is in order. This time around, I'm going to actually reduce space, talk less about particular sites, and just list more great sites for you to visit. I'll start the less-talking part right here, right now. Let me know what you think.

EXCITING NEW FEATURE! This article is now interactive. Go to Brutarian.com. Use this magazine as a mouse pad. Move your mouse over the hyperlinks you see in this column. Clicking on it will launch your Web browser to that site! This is made possible by embedded, magnetized microprocessors interwoven with the grain of the paper. You saw it HERE first — before *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Reader's Digest*, *Psychotronic*, and the *Christian Coalition's Newsletter*. Totally amazing, totally cool, totally technologically astounding — only here in the pages of *Brutarian Quarterly*!

Microsoft's TerraServer <http://terraServer.microsoft.com>

Ever wanted to find your house from space? You can do it here, with satellite mapping. I've found several places I used to live as well as my current office and Casa Brutarian. This is great if you're plotting to invade any small town in the USA (and only works in the USA).

Gordon Sinclair's "Let's Be Personal"

http://www.rcc.ryerson.ca/schools/rta/ccf/news/unique/am_text.html

What's the most patriotic piece of Americanism around? The Declaration of Independence? The Preamble to the Constitution? The Star-Spangled Banner? Lincoln's Gettysburg Address? Maybe, but my vote goes for this — and it was delivered by a Canadian. In 1973, Gordon Sinclair broadcast this in Canada and it became an instant hit in the States. You'll see why, with a relatively decent reproduction of the text — and the broadcast in RealAudio format. They ought to build a monument in D.C. with this inscribed on it. This should be a must-hear/must-read for every American.

Digital-Laughter <http://www.digital-laughter.com>

You're probably tired of getting the same old lame jokes and hyperlinks to humorous Web sites in your email — along with virus hoaxes, urban legends, and so on. The folks running Digital-Laughter have sifted through the muck and reproduced a lot of the best visual stuff here. Very worth perusing for a

few laughs. So is it wrong to forward this link to everyone? Hmm.

Pooh Goes Apeshit <http://www.geocities.com/colosseum/base/9807/>

Are you as sick of Winnie the Shit as I am? Or are you generally possessed of a perverse sense of humor? Or do you laugh easily at things most of society would not? Then check this one out, where Pooh loses his mind and starts a-killing. This one has surfaced around the Net, but with the neat cartoon art with lots of blood, check it out here.

Acid Pope <http://www.acidpope.com>

Guaranteed to offend Catholics and other religious hypocrites alike, one of the most popular porn-related sites. I mention this in homage to Dom Salemi, who thinks I shouldn't focus too much on porn in this column, and to Stately Wayne Manor who agrees with me of this site's value to society.

Official MAME Page <http://www.mame.net>

Whooh! Forget Nintendo and Sega and Sony! Anyone older than 20 knows the best games are the all-time classic arcade hits. The Multi Arcade Machine Emulator actually emulates the original arcade games; you need only to acquire ROM images of the games to play them on your PC. Of course, having the ROM images is illegal if you don't own the actual hardware, so be good! This project is reputedly an attempt to save all the

original classic games, as even the hardware ROMS will degrade over time and nobody wants actual original classics like Donkey Kong, Ms. Pac-Man, Dig Dug, and Space Invaders to be lost forever.

Arcade @ Home <http://www.arcadeathome.com>

Before anyone asks, "Where can I get these illegal arcade ROMs?" you can relax — there is no Napster for this stuff. But Arcade @ Home is the first choice to look for ROMs. Not only can you find original arcade ROMs, but you can get game ROMs for many console game systems, as well as emulator software for the NES, SNES, N64, Genesis, PlayStation, as well as old classics — Atari 2600, ColecoVision, and so on. Your classic gaming days are not lost! I have an affinity for the MAME arcade ROMs, but you can get emulators and ROM files for just about anything. Of course, you MUST own the original ROM hardware in order to legally use any downloaded ROMs, so, again, be good.

The Encyclopedia Mythica <http://www.pantheon.org>

What is more *art brut* than the variances in culture due to religious beliefs? These guys seek to organize gods, deities, legendary figures, and mythical beasts into one site, and they've done a marvelous job. They cover everything from Greek to Roman to Chinese to Korean to Aztec and then some! A framed site, it is logically arranged; each culture has its own alphabetical listing of personages. For those of you irked by no presence of things like Christian mythology, fear

not; go to the Other Articles link and you'll find over a thousand listings that don't fit into any of the other cultural categories.

The MegaPenny Project

<http://www.kokogiak.com/megapenny>

One might argue that this is more educational than *art brut* — and I did happen upon it in the course of home schooling my kids — but it's damned mind-boggling. Kill a few minutes going through these representations of mind-boggling numbers of pennies. It's worth it to make you say, "Huh."

Roger Eritja: Fotografia de Natura

<http://www.eritja.com>

So Dom has complained that I don't do enough *art brut*-ish stuff in this column. Ergo, this site, by a talented photographer who happens to have a liking of photographing bugs. Close-ups of insects... I don't if it's art, but I like it.

Black Ops

<http://www.cruzio.com/~blackops>

This is Miriam Joan Hill and Robert Anton Wilson's Encyclopedia of Conspiracies Home Page. From here are links to scores of sites covering various conspiracy theories — from the common to the unknown. You can spend hours — days — perusing the sites referenced here.

Selected Art Brut Sites

Brutarian is, after all, inspired by the *art brut* concept first attributed to Jean Dubuffet, so how about a sampling of sites dedicated to the raw art ideals? You can find a fantastic list by visiting dir.yahoo.com/Arts/Thematic and selecting "Folk, Self-Taught, and Outsider Art," but here are a few good ones:

- www.galeriejacques.com
- www.geocities.com/soho/coffeehouse/7050
- members.home.net/kdoskas

Color Quiz

<http://www.colorquiz.com>

I don't usually fall for the "personality tests" people forward around in email, but this test, which is based on people's emotional reactions to particular colors, is based on established techniques and brother, is it ever frighteningly accurate most of the time.

American Atheists

<http://www.atheists.org>

Yes, I'm an Atheist. No, you don't want to get into a religious debate with me. I've left *ministers* as quivering balls of flesh, so... that said, if you're an Atheist — and if you're not, maybe you *really* need this — check out this site. If you're an Atheist, it's a great source of information. If you're a closeted Atheist, there are a gazillion ways you can

www.QUICK-PICKS-brut

<http://www.seti.org/science/drake-bq.html> - A scientific explanation of the Drake Equation, the mathematical formula that indicates how can we estimate the number of technological civilizations that might exist among the stars. Check out the rest of SETI.org while you're there.

<http://www.eat-germany.net/crap> - Jeff Z's World of Crap. My favorite section: Dirty Crap to Say in German. Other things, like "The Canonical List of Terms for Taking a Crap," are amusing as well (I contributed to that list!).

<http://www.frozenflames.com> - A very poorly-designed site, Frozen Flames nonetheless is a great resource for free video game downloads. 26 great games include the actual, classic, full version of *Betrayer at Krondor* and my favorite, *Solitude for Windows* (nearly 100 different solitaire card games). Also eight big-game demos. Great for those of you who aren't actually downloading illegal ROM images for MAME.

<http://www.craig.terminator.org.uk> - I'm a huge A-Team fan. This guy has put together the most complete Web source for the A-Team — bar none.

<http://www.university-of-slough.org.uk> - This tongue-in-cheek look at the "if you strap a piece of buttered bread to the back of a cat and drop it, which side hits?" has led to their theory that perpetual motion can be achieved in the form of spinning, hovering cats with buttered bread on their backs — powering such things as city monorail systems. A real hoot.

<http://www.curlydavid.com> - Another porn site I'm sneaking in under Salemi's radar. Good, free stuff of all shapes, sizes, and flavors.

www.WEIRD-SHIT-brut

A selection of sites claiming to have "weird shit" contents. And they do! No lengthy explanations here, but check these out.

<http://www.fred.net/turtle/weird/weird.shtml> - The Legendary Page of Weird Shit

<http://www.noshit.com.au/nsitt/nsitt/weird.htm> - Weird Shit

<http://www.blowfish.com/catalog/videos/surreal.html> - Surrealistic Weird Shit porn videos

<http://www.xlrecordings.com/links/weird.htm> - XL Recordings' Weird Shit page... some truly weird sites are linked off this page.

<http://www.weirdpages.com> - Mostly porn, but the few bizarre pics are worth a trip.

<http://www.selectbestoftheweb.co.uk/weird.html> - Select Best of the Web's interesting weird shit page... most of this is well worth clicking through.

<http://www.erosaddict.com> - Okay, I know, not too much porn... but this has a "Weird Shit" page that is well worth checking out... aside from that, Fellow Appreciator of the Nude Human Body, this site is free and there are lots of great areas.

learn to support your Atheism when being oppressed by your religious friends. If you're not an Atheist, try reading anyway — you might learn something using logic, reason, science, and common sense as a basis for a change.

Golden Raspberry Awards

<http://www.razzies.com>

Oscars, SAG Awards, Viewer's Choice, and so on — don't you get sick of the same old bunch of films winning the same old awards all year long? The Razzies are your answer: they honor the worst movies! *Battlefield Earth* cleaned up with the most this year.

Movie-Mistakes.com

<http://www.movie-mistakes.com>

This site is sort of misnamed. Yes, they do list mistakes in a lot of movies. However, the submissions are visitor-submitted, and some

are incorrect. But the interest here, combined with notes on cameos, hidden "Easter eggs," and other nifty unnoticed tidbits, make this for grand perusing. I originally jumped to this from the Razzies site above and before I knew it had spent three hours browsing around. A must-see for the movie buff.

The Official Stephen King Web Presence

<http://www.stephenking.com>

Whether he's writing novels, publishing electronic books, previewing his new novel in TIME Magazine, or getting hit by a van, he is The Man. His home is just four blocks from my office, and with his generous contributions to the Greater Bangor Area community (baseball field, two libraries, children's ward at the hospital, and far more than I could list here), he's more than just a

writer. Check out all about him here.

Snood

<http://www.snood.com>

Very little pisses me off more than a game that is designed to be addictive, that actually *is* addictive, and, worst of all, sucks me in like a two year-old playing Throw the Food. Snood has done it. I'm actually embarrassed that I'd never heard of this original Mac game (been around five years), but it rocks. Imagine the challenge and strategy of Tetris, Space Invaders, Mahjongg, Dr. Mario, Lemmings, and chess all rolled into one, and you're starting to get the idea. But don't take my word for it. Download this shareware bit and see for yourself. Registering it (\$14.95 is well worth the fee) gets you loads of other features. But enough of this review; I have to get back to my Snood game — going for High Score on the Evil level.

Free Fonts (various sites)

Here is a trio of great free font resources for those of you who like to have a variety of fonts you don't have to pay for. Be sure to check for the terms on commercial usage — such as laying out a magazine.

www.fontfile.com — For two years, Font File has accumulated over 1,800 freeware fonts of professional design and grand creativity. If you've ever wanted a font but could not find it no matter how hard you scoured your CD collection and the Internet, stop here.

www.fontfiles.com — Another free font resource, this one is a bit more commercial, but offers loads of fonts.

www.larabiefonts.com — This guy has a for sale package of 142 fonts he designed — him and only him — and you can pick them up for the ridiculous price of just \$6.99. Or, if you're really cheap, you can download non-deluxe versions for free. This guy is good, this guy is creative, and this guy is way more than fair. You'll find a couple of his fonts right here in this magazine (check the "What's Hot!" column in the back of the magazine).

Jeff Z's World of Crap

<http://www.eat-germany.net/crap/>

In my drive to learn German — or should I say, in my drive to learn how to

swear in German — I stumbled upon Jeff Zalkind's site. First things first, you can visit the parent site, **eat-germany.net**, and likely find many enjoyable things. But Jeff's Crap site is just too damn funny. In addition to his "Dirty Crap To Say In German" page (which DOES, indeed, teach you how to say all you need to say in German), you'll find: "Germany is cool, when it isn't crap" and other Germany-related things; a list of 86 types of crap; and "the canonical list of terms for taking a crap." To this latter, yours truly contributed some ideas; and if you think you've heard all the euphemisms for "shitting," you haven't visited Jeff's page. In addition to the above, there's lots more; check it all out.

Naked News

<http://www.nakednews.com>

It is exactly what it says it is: real news, important news, news you get on the networks and online and in the newspaper, delivered by anchors who are in the nude. Or they start out clothed but as they deliver the news, they begin shedding garments. If you have a dialup connection, you can see a small version of the news; larger and better for broadband users. For a fee, you can get the real deal — full-size and in full glory, on-demand, as-it-happens stories with gorgeous women who disrobe before your very eyes. That doesn't leave out the heterosexual female and homosexual male viewers, though; male anchors are to be found here, too. And the name of the company? Why, Naked Broadcasting Network, of course. These folks are very serious and, let's face it, when you have a choice of watching the same damn news stories from Rather, Brokaw, and Jennings or from Victoria, Carmen, Diane, and Holly (naked!), the choice is quite easy.

Yamaha's Paper Craft

<http://www.yamaha-motor.co.jp/eng/papercraft/>

Oh. My. God. I hate to bow down and review a site done by some huge corporate giant, but the results on Yamaha's Paper Craft page are so extraordinary you can't miss it. Remember doing origami in grade school? Folding a piece of paper until it vaguely resembled an animal or a boat or something? This page takes that a step further. Combining the idea of origami with building detailed models, they provide printable

PDF documents containing cut-out plans and detailed instructions on how to glue together various pieces of cut paper to create some of the most stunning models you have ever seen. I won't belabor you with lists of animals; a quick visit to this page will display enough finished photos to knock your socks off. But when you scroll down and see the array of finished Yamaha motorcycle models, exquisitely detailed and in varied colors, you'll see what I mean. **WARNING:** I am NOT KIDDING about these bikes, guys. They look like they came from detailed plastic model kits, but are **REALLY MADE** from PAPER.

Thunderhawk

<http://www.thunderhawk.org>

Here is *Brutarian's* public service to our friends in Florida. An acquaintance of mine, Sandra Grant, volunteers with these good people and man, is she ever passionate about these cats! Farbeit for me to try to sum this organization up, so let me just quote right off their Web site: "A Native American operated business... Thunderhawk Enterprises, Inc. is a non-profit volunteer organization founded by Ray Thunderhawk which is dedicated to the preservation of the "great" cats. "Big Cat Rescue," our primary focus, is manifested on an individual basis in the rescue of cats from life-threatening situations (e.g. where they would be killed or euthanized), and on a grander scale in the conservation and eventual propagation of the many great cat species... We are on a mission — a mission to preserve these magnificent animals and their habitat before their light is extinguished from the Earth. Many of the great cat species are at least threatened; some are critically endangered, like the largest cat on Earth, the Siberian Tiger, whose numbers are down to a mere few hundred remaining in the wild." So, all you big kitty lovers, head on over to Thunderhawk.org and check out what these fine folks are all about.

BQ

Along with Al Gore, David M. "Indy" Fitzpatrick created the Internet. He has been to "every damn site on the Internet" as his friend Dave Reed has proclaimed in irritation after sending him yet another URL which Indy had already visited.
www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/fitzpatrickdavid.htm

BRUTARIAN QUARTERLY

presents

COOL HORROR FICTION

Next issue will mark our tenth anniversary. It occurred to us that in that first decade, we've published a lot of great fiction from a lot of talented names. To continue that tradition, we give to you four tales of shock fiction guaranteed to keep you coming back for more. Yes, that's right; we'll do anything to sell copies. Including blackmailing, threatening, and begging the authors who were finally coerced to lend their tales to our tails.

48 The Chain-Lynched Man

by Gerard Houarner

The sins of the fathers have haunted many generations. One man is convinced he can beat the curse. But the reason for the curse and a strong dose of karma have other plans.

56 The Move

by Bentley Little

It was a simple favor for a boss he didn't like: help the boss move. The guy was leaving his wife and needed help with the heavy stuff. But the reality of the boss's private life was far more complex than that.

54 Saturday After Noon

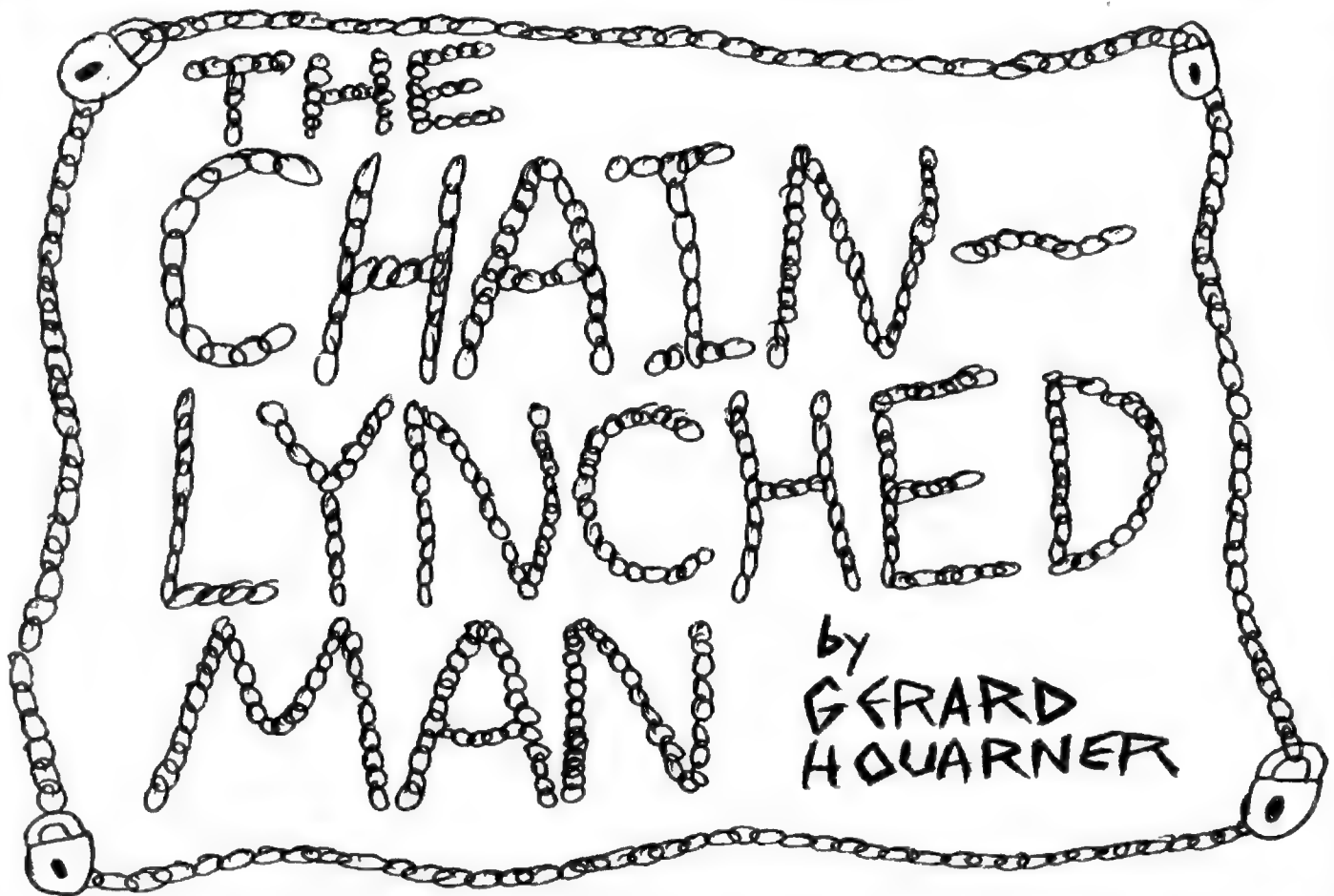
by Steve Rasnic Tem

Perhaps insanity, and normalcy, is simply a matter of perspective. This terribly realistic look into insanity may perhaps be more familiar to some of you than others.

60 The Fifth Quimester

By David M. Fitzpatrick

The worst thing that could happen to this 12 year-old girl and her protective mother would be the girl getting pregnant... or so the mother thought. It just got a whole lot worse.



THE CHAIN- LYNCHED MAN

by
GERARD
HOUARNER

He heard the rattling long before the knock on the door. Thin and remote at first, like tie-down ends bouncing on a flat-bed trailer as it came up the mountain road for another load of trees. Gut-shaking close by. A shouting and a screaming worse than the thunder and lightning that sometimes walked over his side of the mountain. Worse than the county rough-housers who liked to put a scare in people with their four-by-fours and motorcycles, who dared a gut-full of shotgun pellets for the thrill of harassing people like him who wanted to be left alone. A steam-engine roar of metallic clatter churning the air, shaking dishes and glassware, beating out a guttural rhythmic pattern that sounded like a machine calling out his name: Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy.

He had lived in fear of that sound since the Chain-Lynched Man came for Mrs. Bartow when he was seven. He thought back then the thing making it had come for his father, but that was not his father's time. Mrs. Bartow's scream, a raw, ragged-edged voice succumbing to the crisp clank of a few links of chain, had cut deep into the boy Jimmy had been, letting a chill catch his heart and nearly reaching his secret joy in the old, nosey, tattling bitch's death.

For a while after Mrs. Bartow, Jimmy was the only local boy who dared play the Chain-Lynched Man in games. He

was never sure if his friends ran away from him for who he pretended to be, or for who he was by letting himself be such a thing even in play. But he liked the effect either way.

The cacophony of clanging chain links stopped abruptly, thrusting the cabin Jimmy had settled into twenty-two years ago into absolute silence. The crickets were quiet. Raccoons and porcupines had stopped thrashing through the brush. Jimmy's heart was still. If blood continued to pound in his ears, he could not hear it. For a moment, he thought he might already be dead.

The knock came. A single rap on the wooden, windowless door made by an iron link in the chain, perhaps. Or bone.

Jimmy didn't answer, did not even breath. The shutters were closed, and he had turned off the small reading lamp beside the lounging chair in which he sat at the first, distant clink. There was no radio or television blaring an announcement that he was home, and the fireplace had never been used and so could not betray him with a plume of smoke. Though the mountain air was crisp and cool in the late summer, he had not even turned on the electric heater, preferring to bundle himself up against the night's cold. There was no reason for anyone, or anything, to believe he was home.

None of those tricks had worked for his father. The county sheriff investigating his death had told Jimmy the man had committed suicide by hanging, using a length of

ART BY ELISE SOROKA

chain in an abandoned barn. In the end, his father had given up his house, everything he owned, even his son, to live by himself on the road, in the countryside, out of touch from anyone who knew him. The Chain-Lynched Man had still found him.

Another knock sounded, louder than the first. Insistent, as if announcing the visitor knew he was in the house. Jimmy flinched.

He had answers for the Chain-Lynched Man. And a surprise, something he'd been forging ever since the night of that nearby visitation at Mrs. Bartow. Not the shotgun he kept loaded by his bed for strangers and tormentors, but something forged from fear and desperation, tempered by tales of others visited by the Chain-Lynched Man, and the echoes of his father's screams he heard often in his dreams.

The front door opened, locks snapping away as if made of hard candy. A figure, darker than the gloom within the cabin and the night behind it, stood in the doorway. A voice sounded from the night, carried by a foul breath that quickly filled the one-room cabin with a sour cloud that bit into the back of his nose and throat like a decomposing snake.

"You're from that town of cowards and murderers," the voice said. "You made me. What are you doing up on this lonesome mountain all by yourself, trying to hide from me?"

Jimmy straightened his back, spoke as he had rehearsed so many times to the thing before him. "Leave me alone," he said, voice cracking. It had been at least a month since he spoken to anyone. "I had nothing to do with that." His words withered in the air, becoming small and inconsequential.

"You carry the weight," the figure said. "You've done nothing to take it off. You even added some to the burden your folks made."

"How would you know?" Jimmy said, surprising himself with the defiance in his tone. He clung to the emptiness inside him, his only solace, his possible salvation, and wondered if it would be enough.

A rough noise that might have been a chuckle answered his challenge.

"Why're you sitting in the dark? Turn on the light. See what come for you."

Jimmy turned on the lamp on the table beside his chair. The Chain-Lynched Man coalesced out of the darkness, worse than the stories he had heard, worse than he had

ever imagined. He could dismiss pictures locked inside his head, under his control, with a little effort. Forget them on beautiful Spring mornings and under snow-laden trees after a Winter snowfall. But there was no dismissing or forgetting the reality staring at Jimmy, wanting him. Now, and forever more.

The Chain-Lynched Man took a step, entering the cabin. Chains collapsed on to the wooden floorboards, shaking the ground under Jimmy's feet and raising clouds of dust. The irons, some black, others silvered, with rusty links and chipped surfaces, fell from the Chain-Lynched Man's arms and legs, from around his torso and neck, like strands of sea weed clinging to and trailing from a shipwreck dragged from the bottom of the sea, unreeling in impossible lengths. They coiled around his bare, cracked feet like sluggish ser-

pents and flowed behind him into the night like a hellish bride's train. Beneath his raiment of shackles, the figure's ashen black flesh stretched over protruding ribs and bony limbs, covered only by a pair of torn dungarees hanging loose around his hips. Dried, ripped skin peeled away from ancient wounds, revealing dried musculature and the tracks of worms. Old blood stained his pants, his burden of links, the tufts of white hair on his skull.

Jimmy searched for someplace else to look, but his visitor commanded his attention by the simple devastation of his presence. Burning eyes drew Jimmy's gaze to them. White-hot with visions of otherness, they were also as cold as the reach between death and life. His cut lips quivered, his gnarled hands and broken fingers trembled, as if holding an emotion too great for the remains of the body. He smelled of shit and piss, like a man hanged and left to the elements for a day or two, instead of a corpse nearly a hundred years old.

His chest rose. Jimmy braced himself for more words from the dead.

"Troubled by my look?" the Chain-Lynched Man asked. "You made me. You, your father, your father's father and back. And your line of mothers, too."

Jimmy mustered his first line of defense. "I had nothing to do with what happened to you," he shouted, sitting up, bracing himself as if to leap at the dead man. Outrage shook his body, pumped blood to his face, cleared his voice. He hid behind anger, hoping to surprise and shock the spirit with life's power, though his words sounded small even when rage carried them. "You're talking about some-



thing that happened before I was born. Everyone involved is dead. Gone. No one remembers. It's over. History. That kind of thing doesn't happen, anymore. Let it go, why don't you? Give it a rest. Give yourself a rest. Let us get on with life, and you go on to whatever's waiting for you."

"I remember," the Chain-Lynched Man said. "I ain't gone, yet. And that *kind of thing's* been happening since we started calling ourselves men, and I suspect it'll keep happening until we start calling ourselves something else."

Jimmy stood, his mind keeping pace with his racing heart. "What are you afraid of? Why won't you move on? Do you think there's another lynch mob waiting for you on the other side? Were they right in hanging you, did you really kill that woman?"

"Son, you've got a lot to learn about exorcizing the spirits of the dead." The dead man raised an arm, letting a length of chain two-fingers wide hang from above his head. "Most times people used rope. Just so happens there was a wagon-load of chain near enough, and kids liked the way it sounded and asked their daddies if they could use it instead of rope, so they tied a length of it around me and dragged me around town behind a wagon. When I was good and broken, they hung me from a tree, only they didn't tie the chain around my neck so good and I didn't choke right away, and the chain was too heavy for the branch they picked anyway and it fell, so they had to do it off the train trestle over the river running through the valley. Took them an hour to get me over there. By that time the whole town was out, having a party with sweets and bits of left-over supper. There was a photographer touring the county at the time, doing a study of nature and back-woods living and such, and he took pictures of the occasion. Like it was a wedding."

The Chain-Lynched Man squeezed a hand between the chains wrapped around his chest, reached into a gash, pulled out a postcard-sized photograph and showed it to Jimmy.

Jimmy knew the piece. A printer had produced hundreds of copies as a souvenir postcard for the town, and it had been commonly circulated even when he was growing up. Even after all the bodies. In a montage of four photographs, the chain lynching's history was traced from the initial tree, the parade to the train trestle, the work of the men securing the chain to a steel beam, to a final image of the Chain-Lynched Man hanging under the bridge, a solitary black figure floating above a sea of white faces. The images were too small to identify specific people, but Jimmy had seen copies of the full-sized photographs when he was younger, when he and his friends had rifled through their parents' attics for prizes to show off to each other. His grandfather and great-grandfather were both a part of the grinning gang of men surrounding the tree and working on the trestle bridge. His grandmother was a laughing young girl, oblivious to the tortured man floating above her head in the final picture, caught glancing at her future husband with a sly, admiring expression.

"The trick was," the Chain-Lynched Man continued, "they still couldn't lynch me right. Left me hanging there for days screaming and hollering. Well, whimpering, at least. Trains would pass over the bridge and sometimes an engi-

neer would see me and laugh. And the best part of it was, I never killed that woman. I gave her a poke. That I did. But she wanted it, and when she got it she was so ashamed she ran out of town before anybody could talk about her for doing such a thing. People still talked about seeing us together, and when she didn't come around anymore to face the shame of what she did, people came looking for me."

"This wasn't my fault," Jimmy said, looking away from the picture, into the spirit's hard, remote stare.

"Never said it was," the spirit said, putting the picture away. "Your responsibility, now that's something else. Passed on in your family, from one set of kids to another, yeah, that's definitely another thing entirely."

"Are you going to kill everyone descended from the people of that time, from that town?"

"Not everyone. Can't catch but so many. Just the ones who know the history, who hold a little pride in their heart that such a thing happened, who like the power the people had to kill a man, and maybe even the power I have when I come back through death's door for justice."

Jimmy paced back and forth in front of the Chain-Lynched Man, feeling the spirit's frigid presence inside him. Puffed-up rage collapsed without a righteous base, leaving only the fear that had nourished the root of his life since he heard the Chain-Lynch Man come for Mrs. Bartow.

The ring of metal links, the scrape of iron across wood, drove Jimmy stumbling backwards towards his bed. Knowing the action was hopeless, but hanging on to one more faint chance before making his final play, he took down the shotgun and blasted the apparition again and again, in a succession of deafening judgments against being hunted down over time for things he had not done, until every shell casing was ejected. Dust and wood chips flew through the air as pellets slammed into the wooden door and walls behind the Chain-Lynched Man.

When the dust settled and the ringing echoes of gunpowder thunder had faded slightly, the Chain-Lynched Man remained unmoved, unharmed, an enemy as implacable and untouchable as his human tormentors, the drunken gang of aimless young and bitter, older men who tossed empty cans and sacks of dung at his cabin in the middle of the night for fun.

"You know, I've ended quite a few of the lines that came from that time," the Chain-Lynched Man said. "That photographer, for one. I haunted him a bit, and he never had a wife or child before I took him. A few of the men up on that bridge got took, too. Next generation, I got me some more. You were close by, with your daddy, when I came for that Mrs. Bartow woman, right? Widowed, never bore no sons or daughters, made life a misery for what children she found nearby, I understand. I didn't get to your father before he had you, but your mom left him before she gave him any more, so you're the last of your line. And, of course, you've spent the better part of your life hiding up on this mountain a whole half-dozen counties over, by yourself, no woman or man to keep you company, not even a dog. Like I couldn't track your guilt over some sorry earth."

"What do you want?" Jimmy asked, tossing the shotgun aside and collapsing on to the bed.

"I want you hanging from that ceiling rafter on this length of chain I got here," the Chain-Lynched Man said. "And I've learned a thing or two about proper lynching over time, too." He snapped a thin shackle between his hands in front of Jimmy. "This'll hold your weight, but it'll bite into your throat, as well, and cut your air off. You'll choke real good on this one."

"And if I don't want to go?"

"How are you fixing to stop me?"

"Maybe I don't deserve to die."

The Chain-Lynched Man stood over him, surrounded him with a curtain of clinking metal. "You'd have to show me a sign of your suffering. You'd have to prove to me you understand a little of what I went through, maybe made some kind of amends during your little life."

"That's what I'd heard."

"You heard that, did you? How I won't touch some folks, some lines, because they turned themselves around? I won't lie, it's not a customary thing to do among us haints. We tend to take blood for blood. But I figured, while I still had time to figure before I died, that if people learned something from this thing they did to me, I'd leave them alone. Some did move on from that time, from that deed, and became better people for it. And who was I to punish them for it? Why, I'd be no better than the damned souls who strung me up to begin with. And I knew, even with my last breath, that I was truly better than those bastards who killed me, who watched me die while laughing and talking and having wine and chicken under the trees while I died. I was innocent. So I know how it feels to be punished for something you didn't do. I promised I'd leave those alone who took responsibility for what they or their ancestors did, who worked to make wrongs right. Because, really, what's the point of a haunting if you don't let the changes your haunting make live on? You got to prune your orchard, not chop it down. Though I have to admit, in normal times it's you that chooses the orchard you're going to keep, not the other way around. But that's how it worked for me, and I can't say I dislike the work all that much."

"But all that's about me, son, and not about you. Do you have something to say for yourself, something to show me that I might have overlooked?"

Jimmy looked up, willed himself not to blink or flinch at the Chain-Lynched Man's visage looming over him. "You take a look inside me. You see what I'm made of."

"Is that right." The Chain-Lynched Man reached down, put cold fingertips to Jimmy's chest.

Jimmy stared at the fingers to see if this part of the tales he'd heard was really true, almost crying out when the dead man's fingers burrowed into his skin, parted bone, worked a hole as big as a fist into the center of his torso. There was no blood, no pain. Only a spreading chill, like ice building on and replacing tissue and bone. Jimmy leaned forward to get a better view of his own insides, and found a hollow barely illuminated by the table lamp's light streaming through the porous curtain surrounding him.

The Chain-Lynched Man grunted. Tugged at something.

Jimmy felt the secret he had been building and keeping inside him break away.

The Chain-Lynched Man pulled out his hand. In his fin-

gers was a rusty, broken link of a chain.

"That ain't supposed to be there," the spirit said. "How'd you get hollowed out? How'd you get a link of the chain?"

Jimmy checked his chest. It was closed, the wound sealed. Relief made his shoulders sag, his neck relax so that his head dipped down in an unintentional nod. "Surprised someone else suffered?" he asked, with a trace of indignation. Too soon, he told himself. Too soon to know if the trick of camouflaging himself as the hunter had really worked. But he could feel the Chain-Lynched Man wavering, and he knew he had the upper hand.

"Not surprised by that. Seen it before in men and women I didn't expect it in. I can't see everything and everyone, there's bound to be things done I never knew about. But I am surprised a sorry son of a bitch like you suffered anything. You'd have to have a heart."

"Who said I didn't?"

"So you understand what I went through?" The Chain-Lynched Man stepped back, as if to better appraise the mortal shell before him.

"As much as anybody."

"That ain't saying much." The dead man reached out suddenly, prodded Jimmy's chest, laid his moldy hand palm flat against Jimmy's breast. "Wait a minute, you don't have a heart, do you?"

"What do you mean, look, it's right there," Jimmy said, tapping himself between the spirit's outstretched, twisted fingers.

"No, that ain't what I'm talking about. I got to think on

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this."

The Chain-Lynched Man vanished without a sound, leaving the door opened, the lock broken, but no other trace of his passing. Not a mark on the floor, not a trace of a dead man's scent in the air.

Jimmy almost laughed. Tears streamed down his face as he bent over, put his head between his legs and cried out in relief. He'd done it. The weight of generations worth of guilt was gone. He felt so light he thought he might float to the ceiling. His head was as empty as the place the spirit had opened up in him, the place he'd worked so hard over the years to keep pure and simple and bare. He's avoided attachments, relationships, any interests outside his own self-preservation, anything that might clutter up his soul with true reflections of his nature. Mrs. Bartow had indulged herself in hating the neighborhood children, and that had cost her. His own father had driven his wife away and abandoned Jimmy. Even the old kook O'Brien, whose life Jimmy had modeled his own on, had let a dog into his life. The Chain-Lynched Man had found him, and the dog. His nature had been exposed in the occasional taunts and tricks he played on his pet, and the color of his pleasure in their outcomes.

But Jimmy had avoided all emotional contact, living alone off the bounty of the woods, doing occasional jobs for locals for what cash he needed. He had worked at making himself an empty shell. A reflection of the Chain-Lynched Man, who had been hollowed out by the pain and suffering of his unjustified death. What blemishes there were belonged to the world of childhood savagery, not adult awareness and responsibility. He'd figured, correctly, that the Chain-Lynched Man would not be concerned with the acts of a child, but the shape of an adult's life.

Jimmy lay down on his bed and listened to the return of insect calls, the faint rustle of something alive in the brush outside. When the frost in the air became too much, he went to the door, stared out into the darkness that no longer held fear for him, closed the door. Set a table against it so a breeze would not push open the door. Turned the light out, went to bed.

He fell asleep, weary from the burden he had carried so long and had at last successfully delivered.

But the click of the lamp being turned on again woke him.

The clacking of metal on metal drew him upright.

The Chain-Lynched Man was back in the cabin.

"You judged me," Jimmy said. He felt the emptiness he had worked so long and hard to cultivate grow heavy inside him, anchoring him to the bed. How could his emptiness weigh him down, he wondered.

"That's a neat trick," the spirit said, coming to him, surrounding Jimmy in a curtain of chains again. "How'd you learn to be so empty without suffering?"

"I suffered."

"I mean, more than being lonely. Lots of you who come down the line from my killing get to be lonely. That's almost part of the curse, a part I don't even need to have anything to do with. You do it to yourselves. No, I mean, things have been torn out of you."

"Like I said, I suffered."

The Chain-Lynched Man crouched, came face to face with Jimmy. Peered into him. Jimmy sucked his breath in, felt like he was falling, spinning. He couldn't feel the bed, the floor, the air. He couldn't see anything except the dead man's glowing eyes, twin suns around which he circled. He tried to scream, but he'd lost his voice. But the spirit still had his.

"You thought you were ready for me. You thought you could hide from the bear by becoming the bear. Well it don't work that way, not for long, anyway.

"I looked for you in all this burden I carry. You thought these were the chains that hung me? Well, yes, in part. But there's a price for staying among the living, too. For taking on the task of righting the wrong that killed me. In these chains is all the suffering men put on other men in the world. All the wrongs, from times past till this moment. The chains keep growing. It only makes sense, if you think on it. Every time I come back, the burden gets heavier. Been that way since the first of us came back. For some, it's spears and swords that killed them that they carry. For others, rope. Rocks. Whatever took them, like the chains took me.

"But I couldn't find you in these chains. Your suffering isn't there. It sometimes happens I miss someone, because, really, there's so much I carry. But I find out soon enough when I catch such a one, and I do let him go. You heard those stories. That's what gave you hope, right? But I can't find you in this mess. I even tried fixing that link I found in you to what I carry, but it just slipped off. It isn't true. It didn't connect to what I went through all those years ago, what men, women and children have been taking from each other for thousands of years. What you showed me wasn't real."

The Chain-Lynched Man backed away, and Jimmy found his bearings in the world, as well as his voice. Dizzy, he held on to his reasoning, which was all he had left. "It was real to me," he said, and his voice sounded like a stranger's. "Years depriving myself, being alone, that was as true to me"

The cabin shook with the spirit's anger. Thunder sounded in the tiny space, through Jimmy's hands as he held them to his hears, and reverberated in the void he carried inside him. "Suffering made *me*, boy," the spirit shouted. "Unjust, uncalled for suffering. All you did was avoid suffering. Deprived yourself a little. But every day you got up, you had peace. I had hell. Pain hollowed me out. You carved out everything that might have been important to you, then you refused fill yourself with the things that might have given meaning to your pitiful existence. Love. Family. Work. Even a dog might have proved to be your salvation. But you didn't let anything reach you. I got emptied by pain, and I didn't have the chance to heal. It ain't the same thing. Pain leaves things on the walls of your emptiness. Sometimes you see them, when the light is right inside you. Drive you a little crazy. Haunts you, even after you're dead. Turns you into a haint, sometimes. You don't know nothing about suffering. You ain't gonna turn into nothing once you're dead."

The dead man stopped, and the cabin quieted. "Not without a little help, anyhow," the spirit said.

Voices rose in the night. Whispers carried on a breeze. Laughter. Drunken, hysterical laughter. "He's in there, all right," someone said. "Door's opened wide." "Maybe he's taking a leak," someone else. "Don't he have a bathroom in there?" More laughter. "Fire it up and let's see him dance."

"You're not so alone as you thought," the spirit said.

A bottle broke against a corner of the cabin. Light flickered outside. Flames crackled.

"Seems like you've gathered your own little family," the dead man said.

Jimmy stood. The Chain-Lynched Man backed away. Stood in front of the door. Slammed it shut. Chains flew out from him, sealing off the door, the shuttered windows, even the chimney. Another bottle smashed against the roof. The Chain-Lynched Man turned his head and blew against the inside of the wall. Flames grew as if doused with gasoline. Smoke seeped inside through cracks. Jimmy coughed. "Come on out, you dumb son of a bitch," someone yelled outside. "What, you want to burn up with that stick house?"

The Chain-Lynched Man spoke, but now his voice was a whisper, as if he were afraid he might be overheard by the drunken men setting fire to Jimmy's cabin. "The link you showed to me, the thing you pretended to have isn't something you come by on your own. It comes from the pain of being with others, and the terrible things people do to one another. It comes from injustice tearing great chunks of your self out until there's nothing left. And when there's nothing left of you, something hard grows in that nothing from what's left of the hurt and pain that ate up your heart and carved your soul. That hard thing is, at least in my eyes, a piece of chain, and it connects you to every other link in a long chain going back to Egypt, to Babylon, to the first homo motherfucker sapien who gutted his neighbor, fucked his mother, killed his father, ate his brothers and sisters, and made everyone around him kiss his ass and if they didn't kiss his ass he killed them, too."

Fire whipped through the cabin, catching on the bed linen, furniture, the ceiling. Fists pounded on the door. "Come on out, you crazy asshole. We don't want to hurt you. Hell, we're just getting a little fun, that's all. Come on, what you got on this place, lighter fluid? It's going up too fast. We didn't mean it to burn you out. Just scare you a little. Get out, open up and get the hell out."

Jimmy fell to his knees. Fire swept along the floorboards, licked at his clothes. Gagged from the smoke, eyes stinging, he crawled backwards until he hit a wall.

"You worked so hard to forge yourself a link in these chains," the dead man said. "And I've been carrying them for a long while. Maybe it is time I laid them down, put my past to rest, and allowed someone else to take up the greater burden I've had to carry to pay for my vengeance. Someone deserving."

The fire reached Jimmy, embraced him. Crept across his flesh, consuming clothes, biting into skin, stripping away layers of meat, making blood boil and fat sizzle. Jimmy flailed, fighting off the flames, but they took his blows gladly, swallowing fists and arms and legs. And when the fire was all around him, and inside him, racing

through lungs and guts and arteries, behind his eyes and in his skull, a weight settled on Jimmy, pinning him to the floor. Chains fell, unraveling from the spirit's body in a tempest of iron, crashing through the floor, bringing down the walls and roof. The men outside cursed and screamed. The cabin burst into a pyre reaching for the stars, for both Jimmy and the Chain-Lynched Man.

"You feel it now?" the spirit said in Jimmy's ear, as wave after wave of agony passed through his mortal remains. "I feel it. The freedom, the call to another place, the peace of letting go of what happened in this world. Of course, you're feeling something different. You don't have chains, you have fire. But the fire is as heavy as the chains I carried, and the flames go burning back to the first man who ever burned another's house down, who put eyes out with a glowing stick, who sacrificed his enemy on a flaming altar. You're linked now to all those people, just like I was. Now you got to carry the burden."

Through the flames and the debris, Jimmy rose, pushed, shouted no, screamed for release, hit the open night air and lit the countryside with his presence. The drunken party of men staggered back, fled for cover, drove off in cars whose screeching tires were melting from the heat of his transformation.

"Of course, it ain't the kind of suffering people put on themselves," the spirit said, his voice fading as the fire's roar, and the voices contained in that roar, became all that Jimmy could hear. "Mine wasn't. And all those people you're joined to, past and present? They didn't sit in some hole and hide out from life. Some took risks, others couldn't escape the fact that they were in the wrong place at the wrong time. They all paid. In ovens, in burned-down churches, in their own homes, in secret cells buried under stone and neglect. So maybe some day you really will understand what I went through, and all those others, as well. And maybe then you'll figure a way to get yourself free from the burden you took on."

Jimmy reached out after the vanishing voice, peered through the crimson haze of his vision for the Chain-Lynched Man. What he saw instead was a world of people in pain, tortured deliberately, casually, methodically, by small, empty vessels of flesh. Their screams and anguish became his. His name, his heritage, the cluster of stunted emotions, half-formed desires and fuzzy memories that were at the core of his self, flew away in the smoke of his annihilation. Through the growing roar of the flames that were becoming his voice, he heard the departing spirit say:

"I just wouldn't try pretending to understand again if I were you, Burning Man."

If there were more, the Burning Man could no longer understand.

BQ

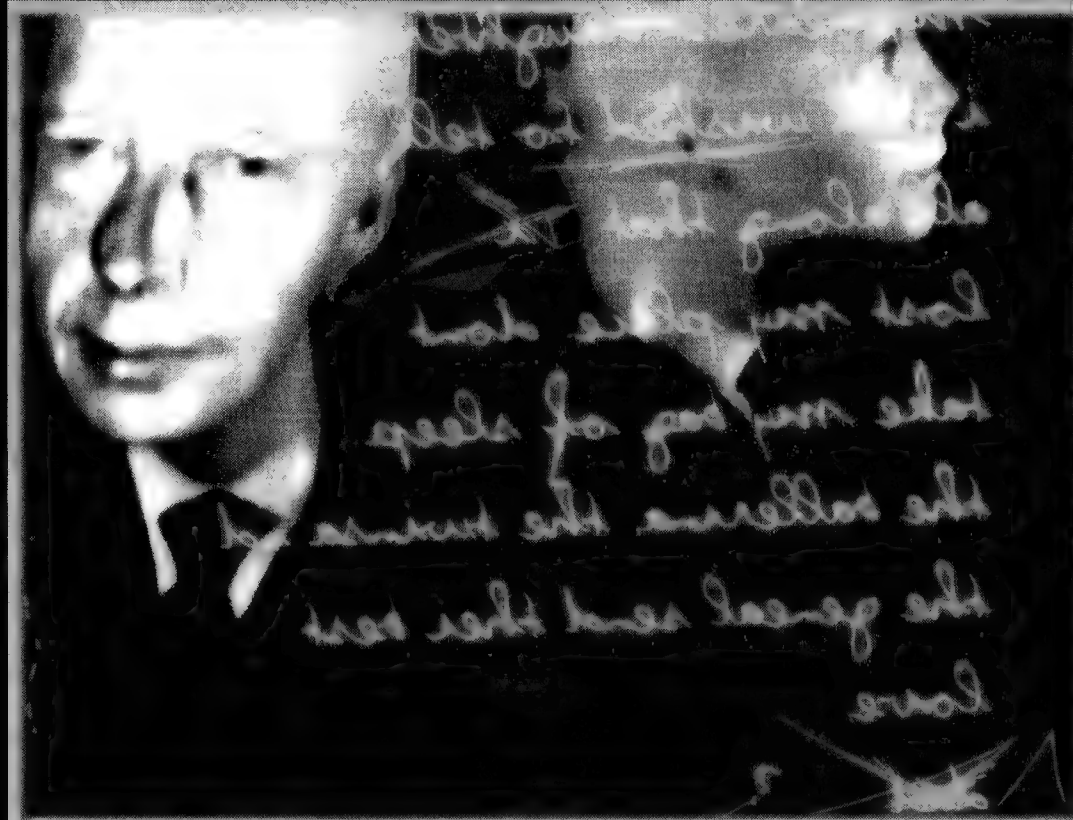
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SATURDAY AFTER NOON



Now, this place has no mirrors. They were all removed before I came. Rowley, who seems perfectly normal except for his worship of the letter "T," says it's because of the glass—potential sharp edges and all of that—which makes perfect sense, of course. The fact that I didn't think of that right away, that the danger wasn't immediately apparent, could be symptomatic to a professional's eyes I suppose.

In any case, I suspect that it's more than an issue of shards of glass and the damage they might do to hands or a face. Sometimes I imagine what it must have been like for these people, the only friends I have left in the world, when they had mirrors to contend with. To be on your way to a dinner party at the Queen of the May's tree house, anxious to discuss the rise of unsweetened misery with her grand counselor the unzipped fly, and then to have to confront this image of an old man in a hospital gown, his butt hanging out, hair much whiter than he remembers, and the expression on his face so frail and weepy—well, it would be quite a come down in the world I think, quite a trip down to the abandoned shore.

So why encourage the upset? Banish the mirrors. Rowley tells me that the first step, however, was to remove the smaller mirrors but to cover the larger ones with thick layers of cardboard and tape. What a scene that must have been! To see these

great panels with their reflections draped—and to wonder—and you just know they *all* did—what secrets were being hidden from them.

The one in charge (Is it another doctor? I have no idea.) would have done well to have asked Rowley, or the General, Stuttering Will, any of them. Ask a madman. The faces of the past are everywhere, rising out of the shadows, shining in the windows, curled into the folds of stained pajamas. Ready to cling and travel with you like airborne seeds or balls of cat's fur.

And still there are worse things than memory. There is regret, and failed anticipations. There are those faces as well, the lives you have turned your back on.

The General marshals his troops. The chairs with their sturdy legs perform admirably — no resistance there. But the lamp and the seat cushion refuse to cooperate at every opportunity, not even waiting for the General to turn his back. He reaches out a hand to steady them into place, but the hand is shaky. It's the new medication but I'm not sure if the General realizes this. He thinks he's getting too old for this, but he's really only thirty-six.

I have heard that at one time the General had quite a responsible job. Vice president of paper clips and coat hangers or some such. Then at some point he could not do it anymore. He missed his place, lost his bookmark. Forgot his lines. It's almost surprising, the number of men in here simply because they forgot their lines and couldn't do their jobs anymore. I think that is part of what happened to me,

by **Steve Rasnic Tem**

Art by **Elise Soroko**

but maybe not all of it.

The ballerina crashes into the TV, performing her pirouette. The others complain, but I help her up. "I left my slippers on my other feet," she tells me, and dances off toward the sunroom.

On television a man in a nervous black suit delivers a lecture on job interview techniques. In their battered chairs my fellow audience members hang on his every word, but do not take notes. Some combinations of medicines play havoc with a person's handwriting. They may make it more difficult to read. It has been three months since I last opened a newspaper, and my fourteen letters home remain unwritten.

"Who better to sing the song of the tragic tractor?" John whispers into the ear I reserve for secrets.

Ants perform an intricate maneuver across the wallpaper by my left shoulder. One line of their travels duplicates the slogan of a popular cold medication.

Sitting in the darkest corner of a too-bright room, Bob says goodbye all day long.

And by the door to the lunchroom/visiting room, one of the male nurses attempts to wave me over. A young actress from an old television series peers like a scared bird from beneath his left arm. From the way the male nurse stands, I do believe he wants to have sex with her.

Upon further examination I realize this is my daughter come to visit, and I understand I must separate her from the nurse's bad intentions as quickly as possible.

I hurry over, ignoring the protests of separated Siamese twins—one black and one white—who sit on the floor each day, commenting on the invisible skin that connects them, that is forever being trampled upon by oblivious passersby. When I reach the young woman my daughter she walks me into the lunchroom for our visit. I hug her awkwardly, and what I get back from her is more than mere awkwardness. I sense her fear that if I hug her too completely she will be compelled to remain here forever.

"Dad, you don't belong here. I want you to come home."

I look around knowing what she means, but not quite able to parse that meaning. This *is* my home—this is where I live. And the idea that fragile human beings, so ill-at-ease in their own bodies, could actually "belong" anywhere is quite beyond me. "This is home," I say simply, careful not to reveal any of the many complications. Normal people never want to hear about the many complications. It scares them, or worse, makes them angry.

She bites back a tear, reenacting a scene I have witnessed in many movies and television shows. I wonder which one she has copied this particular instance from.

"There's nothing wrong with you, Dad." She's come to me without patience, which I must admit makes me a bit apprehensive.

"I think my doctors would disagree."

"You're here voluntarily, Dad. Your doctor told me. He says you can leave anytime you want. So why don't you leave?"

This is unexpected, and I feel the smile I've maintained since first seeing her falling away. For just a moment I get a glimpse of how I must seem to her, this aging man, her father, who has given up and chosen the institution to hide out the rest of his days.

The windows begin to cry, and the floors sigh with the weight of the invisible. "Don't take my bag of sleep," I say to

her, thinking there may be nothing I can do to convince her of my aberration. I turn to watch the windows weep.

"Do you know what the weather is like outside, Dad?"

"It's raining, my love. I'm not crazy."

"Then come home, or whatever you want to call the place. Come with me."

The roof is on fire above me. I can smell the children's burning flesh. Soon there will be no more roof, and I will stare straight up to Neptune.

I look at her. She is crying. I can remember the little girl she had been and I feel terrible. "I can't decide who to be," I say, beginning to cry myself.

"Just be yourself, Dad." Her anger is obviously genuine—it's worn into her face. I am grateful to recognize that.

Somewhere, in another hall, Shirley is waiting for the Insect King. She is dressed in white, with three folds of newspaper over her head. I know this because this is what she does every day. She has married and divorced the Insect King many times. Theirs is a troubled relationship.

"Dad, why aren't there more visitors?"

I don't know how to explain this to her. "We get visitors," I tell her. Every Saturday afternoon... But I can't go on. Bob and Shirley, the General, the Ballerina, they've all wandered into the lunchroom. They sit down, they get up, they wander around the room. Cold like a hand rubs at my arm.

"She wouldn't want you to be like this..." my daughter is saying, has been saying. I wasn't listening.

"What did you say, honey?"

She looks at me oddly. "Mom. I was saying that Mom wouldn't have wanted you to act like this after she died. She would have wanted you to keep it together."

The cold in my arm settles deeper, and despite myself I look up, toward the window.

And there I am, pacing back and forth, gesturing angrily. I move my head in front of my daughter's face, afraid that she might see. But she can't see, of course.

And as I turn my head I see myself again, a gentler, more contented me, standing behind my daughter and getting ready to caress her with his hands. And somehow this one is even worse than the other one.

"Get away from her!" I scream, and before I know it the male nurse is behind me, dragging me away. My friends protest the aggressiveness of this solution, even the Siamese twins. My daughter cries like a little girl, inconsolable, and that is the worst of this.

In my room, the light bulb speaks disparagingly of the night. Dust beneath my bed dances to the sad songs the walls would sing if only they had mouths.

I gaze out of my one face and a hundred faces of me stare back, all angry for my failure of ambition and terrible lack of care. If I am not careful I know they will be the death of me.

"I don't know what to do anymore," I whisper quietly. "I don't know how to be."

And the faces come, and come again, to make one vast and unforgiving stare.

BQ

Steve Rasnic Tem is a well-known writer. You can learn more about him at PENUMBRA: The Melanie Tem and Steve Rasnic Tem Web Site, at <http://www.m-s-tem.com>

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The Move by Bentley Little

There was nothing Webster hated more than a messy desk. He took a deep breath. Back in Purchasing, these performance reviews had been a non-observed formality. Ted Brooks, his former supervisor, had not taken them seriously, had filled out the required forms in a uniformly positive manner, dropping then off at his desk for him to sign at his leisure. But Webster took performance reviews very seriously, and ever since Dave had transferred to Personnel last year, he had dreaded these quarterly evaluations. The Personnel Manager was an anal-retentive neatness freak, and his evaluations covered not only work performance but office orderliness and personal appearance.

There was a knock on the doorframe, and Dave forced himself to smile as Webster walked into the room.

The Personnel Manager strode purposefully across the office, a sheaf of papers in his hand. That was the first thing that tipped him off, that indicated to him that something out of the ordinary was happening here. Usually, Webster stood in the doorway for several moments and carefully looked around the room, taking in every stray sheet of paper, every leftover paperclip, before finally walking slowly forward and performing his formal desk inspection. This time, though, he walked straight across the carpeted floor without even bothering to glance around the office.

"Sit down, Dave. Sit down." Webster reached across the desk and handed Dave the stapled forms. "Here's your review. Look it over, sign it at your convenience. If there's anything about it that you'd like to discuss, let me know."

Dave gave only a cursory glance to the top page, but he saw that nearly all of the checkmarks were in the "Exceeds Company Standards" column.

Now he knew something was wrong. A positive review? No discussion? Had a pod person taken over Webster's body?

The Personnel Manager sat down in the chair on the opposite side of the desk. "So. How's it going? Keeping busy?"

Dave nodded uncertainly. "Yeah... I mean, yes."

"Any complaints?"

"Uh, no." Dave shook his hand, still wondering where this was headed.

"Good. Good." Webster smiled. He leaned forward, adjusting his tie. "I was wondering," he said, "if you could do me a little favor?"

So that's what this was all about. Dave suddenly understood. Webster had given him a good review and had gone through this song and dance because he wanted something from him.

He was surprised but tried not to let it show. He had not figured Webster for an I'll-scratch-your-back-you-scratch-mine kind of guy. He'd always thought the man had more integrity than that. Asshole that he was, the personnel manager had at least seemed like a true believer—and Dave had respected that.

Now it turned out that he was just another office politician, out

for votes.

Dave forced himself to smile. "Sure," he said. "What do you need?"

"I was wondering if you could help me move this weekend?"

The request came completely out of the blue. He had expected to be asked to perform some sort of office dirtywork — the delivering favor caught him off guard. He stared stupidly at the Personnel Manager, not responding.

"I'd really appreciate it. My wife and I are... separating, and I'm moving out. To an apartment. I need someone to help me lift some of the bigger boxes and pieces of furniture. It shouldn't take more than an hour or two. I'm renting a U-Haul, and I'll probably take most of the stuff over myself, but I do need help with the heavier things."

Dave blinked, nodded. "Okay."

"Thanks," Webster said, standing and extending his hand across the desk. "I knew I could count on you."

Dave pulled on front on Webster's house a few minutes before nine, parking on the street.

As he would have expected, Webster's directions were perfect, the map he's drawn correct down to the indications on "street," "avenue" and "way." The house, too, was what he had expected: freshly painted, spotless windows, perfectly maintained lawn. Only the oversized U-Haul truck seemed out of place here, and as Dave glanced around at the houses in the upscale neighborhood, he had no doubt that their inhabitants were peeking through cracks in closed curtains in order to spy on this scene.

Webster emerged from around the cab on the truck, and Dave unbuckled his seatbelt, getting out of the car. "Mr. Webster!" he called.

The Personnel Manager looked over, frowning, then broke into a smile. He walked forward, hand extended. "Thanks for coming," he said.

Dave shook the hand. It was weird seeing Webster in weekend clothes — jeans and a pullover shirt — they didn't seem to fit right, didn't match his personality. He was a three-piece-suit kind of guy, and casual attire looked awkward on him, out of place.

Webster led the way around the truck and up the driveway to the front door of the house. "I really appreciate this," he said.

Dave followed him through the open doorway.

And almost gagged.

The stench was horrible, a gross cloying odor that was familiar but not immediately recognizable. He stared at the floor in front of him, not wanting to meet the Personnel Manager's eyes, and he saw that the white carpet of the entryway was discolored in places by patches of yellow.

He squinted.

Piss stains?

Yes. That was the odor. Dried urine.
 Dave cleared his throat, tried to smile. "Uh, who gets the dog?" he asked.
 Webster frowned. "Dog?"
 "Cat?"
 "We don't have any pets. Cindy's allergic."
 No pets? Dave looked again at the yellow carpet stains. Then who'd been peeing on the floor?

A young woman poked her head around the corner of the entryway. Cindy, he assumed. She was quite a bit younger than Webster, and her face was contorted into a grimace of undisguised hate. Ordinarily, she was probably very pretty, but she had obviously just awakened and the dirty bathrobe she was wearing, as well as that angry, framed by wild sleep-tossed hair, gave her a look of derangement.

Dave looked away, feeling embarrassed and uncomfortable. He'd known Webster was moving out of the house, and he supposed he should have expected this, but this Personnel Manager's perpetually calm demeanor had led him to assume that this was an amicable breakup, that he would not be witness to any emotional unpleasantness.

Cindy disappeared back around the corner.

"We'll start in my bedroom," Webster said. "I want to get the dresser in the truck first."

Dave nodded. The idea of helping Webster move had been awkward enough as it was. He did not really know the man and did not really like him. He was doing this out of obligation and career coercion more than anything else.

Now there was this.

He could almost feel the tension in the air.

They rounded the corner into the living room. Dave glanced quickly to the left and saw Cindy standing behind the back of the couch, glaring at them with disapproval. Webster seemed not to notice, or not to care, but Dave sensed the heat of the women's gaze as he followed Webster through the living room and into the hall.

He found himself wondering who was at fault here. Was Webster leaving his wife or had she kicked him out? Who had wronged whom? Whose side should he take in this?

No one's side, he told himself. Just help carry the furniture and boxes and get the hell out of here.

Webster pushed open the door at the end of the hall, flipping on the light as he did so. The small bedroom was crowded with furniture and cardboard boxes; there was only a small open path of carpet stretching from the doorway to the bed. The curtains were closed, but even in the dim yellowish illumination of the ceiling light, Dave

could see that everything was covered with dirt and dust.

There were leaves and pieces of trash on the floor, plates and empty coffee cups on the furniture.

Webster had obviously been living for some time in this back room of the house, and for a brief moment Dave felt sorry for the man.

"That was Cindy," Webster said. "Just ignore her. She's all bitched out because I'm leaving. She knows I've been seeing someone else."

The sympathy fled. Dave nodded, saying nothing. This was more information than he wanted to know. He'd wondered about the

breakup, wanted to know what was going on, but when it came down to it, didn't feel comfortable hearing intimate details of the Personnel Manager's home life.

"Where should we start?" Dave asked. "What do you want to bring out first?"

"The dresser," Webster said. "But we'll have to move some of these boxes. Why don't you take some of these by the door and put them in the hall."

Dave bent down, picking up the box nearest him. He looked into the open carton as he carried it out. There was a photo lying on top of the other items in the box. A photo of a much younger Webster wearing a pink pinafore dress, his head covered with a blond Shirley Temple wig. He was bent over, grabbing his ankles, and a bald, mustached man clad in only a black leather jockstrap was sticking a long pin into Webster's parted buttocks.

Dave slowly placed the box down on the floor, staring down, unable to look away. There were other pictures beneath the photo, and he surreptitiously glanced back toward Webster, who was picking up another carton, his back turned.

Dave tilted his box to the left and quickly looked at the other photos as the contents shifted. He saw the backside of a man bent over a gymnastics bar, saw a leather-

hooded woman lying on the tiled floor with her shaved vagina pressed against the base of a toilet, saw a diapered Webster in an oversized crib.

Then Webster brought his box over and set it down, and Dave quickly stood, walking back into the bedroom.

Most of the other boxes were sealed, but there was one with a partially open lid, and as he carried it into the hallway he saw a large pink penis-shaped pacifier lying atop of old *Life* magazines.

"I think we can bring the dresser out now," Webster said.

"All right." Dave helped push aside a few other boxes and



sacks in order to widen the path through the room, then walked over to the dresser. There was a glass-topped case the size of a cereal box on top of it, and he picked up the case.

"I'll take that," Webster said quickly.

Dave looked into the case and saw a collection of razorblades arranged in symmetric rows against black velvet: silver blades, gold blades, jewel-encrusted blades, even what looked like a glass blade. He would not have thought anything of it had he not seen the photographs and the pacifier but that, along with Webster's quick insistence on taking the case, made him distinctly uneasy.

He handed Webster the item and saw, on a corner of the glass, a brownish drop of dried blood.

Dave watched as the Personnel Manager lovingly held the case and carried it into the hall. What kind of man was Webster? he wondered. You thought you knew someone by the way they spoke and what they did and how they acted, thought you could judge a person's character by his behavior. But you couldn't. You never knew what a man was like until you entered the world of his private life.

He had entered Webster's world.

And he wished to God that that he hadn't.

"Let's get that dresser out of here. It's getting late."

The drawers had already been emptied, and the two of them picked up the dresser and carried it out.

Cindy was still standing behind the couch in the living room, and she glared at them as they passed by. "Anything you leave behind I'm giving away to the Goodwill." Her voice was low, harsh, furious.

Webster ignored her. "Put it down when we get outside," he said. "I need to pull out the ramp on the truck."

Webster pulled out the loading ramp, they carried the dresser into the van, placed it against the cab wall, and walked back inside the house. Cindy was no longer in the living room. She moved the kitchen, but Dave could still see her staring at them over the breakfast counter. He wanted to apologize to her, to let her know that he was not taking Webster's side in this, he was just someone from work recruited to perform menial labor for his boss, but he had no opportunity to speak to her and once again Webster to the back of the house.

He hazarded a glance into the master bedroom as they walked down the hall.

He stopped.

Stared.

The room was devoid of furniture. There was no bed, no dresser, no nightstand, no chair. There was only the gymnastics bar he'd seen in the picture, and a pile of studded leather straps on the carpetless floor next to it.

In the center of the room was a drain.

He felt suddenly cold.

"Hey!" Webster called. "What are you waiting for?"

Dave hurried back to Webster's room, where the Personnel Manager was standing in the doorway, frowning at him.

"You're here to help me move," Webster said slowly. "To carry things. Period."

"I know," Dave apologized. "I'm sorry."

Webster laughed, though both the expression of mirth and its heartiness were fake. "Don't worry about it."

They took the bed apart next, carrying out first the mattress, then the box springs. There were stains on the mattress, not only semen but blood, and Dave tried to ignore them, but he couldn't.

He glanced quickly into the master bedroom as they passed by.

The frame next. And the headboard. Cindy was nowhere to be seen, though he heard sounds coming from the kitchen.

They began taking out the boxes that had been stacked in the hallway.

Dave stared once again at the photographs as he placed that first box on the floor of the truck—

The pin. The panties. The leather. The diaper.

—and he felt a faint stirring in his gut.

Deeper in the truck van, Webster chuckled. From one of the boxes, he withdrew a strange object that looked like a foreshortened metal detector.

"What's that?" Dave asked.

"Cattle prod." He laughed harshly. "I think I'll leave that here." He walked past Dave and jumped out of the truck. "I'll let her have it. For old times' sake."

Dave followed him back into the house. Cindy was in the living room again, standing in front of the sliding glass door, facing them. Webster threw the cattle prod onto the carpet.

Dave watched the Personnel Manager's wife, saw her reaction when they walked into the room, when Webster threw down the cattle prod. He'd only *thought* she was glowering at them, he realized. Now that he looked more carefully, he saw that it was not anger but fear on her face.

She was afraid of her husband.

It was an inescapable conclusion, and he thought of the items he had seen in the boxes. He still could not reconcile this Webster with the fastidious, Felix Ungerish supervisor at work. It was as if they were two separate people.

Something about that frightened him.

If he had been leaning toward the wife's side, he was now firmly and completely in her corner. He glanced at the woman, glanced away. He wanted to leave right now to walk out and not come back. He wanted no part of this. He did not want to help or support Webster in any way.

But what would the Personnel Manager do if he quit right now, refused to help him move?

He might fire him.

He might torture him.

That was what he was really afraid of, wasn't it? Deep down, that was what scared him. Webster was physically bigger than he was and, obviously, he was into some weird shit.

He thought of the box of razorblades, the penis pacifier, the room with the gymnastics bar and the straps and the drain.

Besides, there was no telling what Webster would do to his wife if Dave bailed right now. The Personnel Manager might punish her for his defection.

It was better to help Webster move, get him out of the house, get this job over and done with, then sort everything out in his mind later.

There wasn't that much more to do, as it turned out. A bookcase, a few small pieces of furniture, some more boxes. After packing them into the still half-empty truck, Webster pulled down the van's rear gate, locking it shut. "You going to drive your car?" he asked. "Or do you want to ride with me in the truck?"

Dave hadn't planned on doing either, but obviously Webster expected him to help unload as well as load. "I'll take my car," he said. "Then you won't have to drive me back here."

"Good point." Webster looked back toward the open front door, thought a moment, started walking in. "Wait here," he said. "I'll be back in a second."

Dave remained in place. A moment later, he heard voices yelling. Both Webster's and his wife's. There was a loud snap, as if a bullwhip had cracked. A woman's scream.

Webster came out seconds after, adjusting his belt. The front door was open, and he did not bother to close it. He took out the truck keys as he walked. "My new apartment's only a mile or so away. You can follow me."

It was easier hauling the boxes and furniture into the apartment than it had been taking them out of the house. The apartment was in the front of a large complex, on the first floor, and the two of them unloaded the truck quickly, not speaking.

After, Webster offered him a glass of water, and Dave gratefully accepted.

He stood in the small living room, wiping the sweat from his face with the back of his sleeve, drinking the cold water, thinking that

he should speak to Webster but not knowing what to say.

"So what's next?" he asked finally, forcing himself to talk. "Are you two going to get lawyers now, let them fight it out?"

Webster shrugged. He looked sad and lonely and lost, standing there sweating amidst his unpacked boxes, and once again, for a brief second, Dave actually felt sorry for him.

"Are you going to try to work it out?" he asked.

Webster laughed harshly. "With that bitch? Fuck, no."

The flash of sympathy disappeared as quickly as it has arrived. You're the one who tortured her, Dave wanted to say. You're the sicko who beat her. But he said nothing, only quickly finished his water, handing back the glass. "I'd better get going," he said.

Webster nodded, held out his hand. "Thanks for the help. See you Monday."

In his sole gesture of defiance, Dave refused to shake the hand. "Yeah," he said. He turned, walked out of the apartment, back to his car.

He drove to Webster's house.

He hadn't really known he'd been planning to do that until he drove past the freeway onramp and kept going straight, but he was not surprised at himself, and the gesture felt right. He'd been thinking of that whip sound and the woman's scream all the time they'd been unloading the truck, and he'd wondered if Cindy was all right. Maybe she needed help. It would only take a few minutes to check on her.

He pulled into the now empty driveway. The front door of the house was open.

It had not been closed. Everything was exactly as they'd left it. He got out of the car, feeling cold. He walked up the short walk, rapped twice on the doorframe. "Mrs. Webster?" he called.

There was no answer.

"Mrs. Webster?"

No answer.

Maybe she didn't want to go by the last name "Webster" anymore. Maybe she wanted to go back her maiden name. Maybe—Maybe she was dead.

"Hello? Anybody home?" He walked into the house,

The smell hit him again. His gaze went to the stains on the rug. It couldn't have been all force and coercion. According to Webster, he was leaving and Cindy was upset because she found out he'd been having sex with someone else. Obviously, she still cared about him. In fact, she had to love Webster a lot in order to put up with his... proclivities.

Maybe she'd killed herself.

That possibility hadn't occurred to him before, but it didn't seem all that farfetched.

"Mrs. Webster?" he called. "Cindy?"

Silence.

He walked into the living room, into the kitchen, back through the living room, into the hall.

She was in the master bedroom.

She had shackled her feet to the floor, and she stood there, naked, legs spread, hands grasping the gymnastics bar. He saw the scars on her body, the welts. Her pubic area was completely shaved.

"I was hoping you'd come back," she said.

He stared at her dumbly.

"That prick wasn't man enough to handle me anymore. He had to turn to some safe little conservative one-holed cutie in order to pretend he was a man." She laughed.

His first impression had been right, Dave realized. Anger, not fear.

She wasn't afraid of Webster. She was disgusted with him.

"Think you can handle it?" she asked.

Against his will, he felt a stirring between his legs. He backed up, shaking his head.

"Oh, yes you can," she said. "I can see it in your eyes."

He had stopped backing up, he realized. He was not turning away, he was not leaving. In fact, he was staring at the hairless slit between her spread legs, at the pinkish welt that rose gracefully up and connected to her protruding belly button like a vaginal extension.

He thought of Webster's photos, his collection of razor blades.

He was hard, his stiff erection pressing against the thick material of his jeans.

"Come in here," Cindy said softly. "I won't hurt you." She smiled. "Unless you want me to."

No, he thought. This isn't right.

"Don't worry. There's a drain."

He stepped in the room.

"I can't do this," he said.

"You want to, though."

Dave nodded.

"Look to your left."

He looked.

"Go on," she said. Her voice was throaty, husky, filled with desire and anticipation.

He thought of leaving thought of running. Didn't.

He stood there for a moment, unmoving.

He bent down to pick up the cattle prod.

BQ

Of Bentley Little, Stephen King said, "Bentley Little is a master of the macabre." Check out this stunning author at our Web site:
<http://www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/others/littlebentley.htm>

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One day, out of the blue, my eleven year-old daughter looked up from her crossword puzzle and said, "Mom, does a boy have to put his *thing* inside you for you to get pregnant?"

It caught me off guard, but it wasn't a question any parent shouldn't expect. I was doing the dishes at the time and almost dropped the glass I was scrubbing, more out of nervousness than surprise. I held my composure and let her know that yes, that was the case. Although I enjoyed intimacy with my husband, I had always suffered a psychological block about the act of intercourse, which made me terribly nervous even after twenty-four years of marriage; so I suppose that's why I was unsure how to proceed.

So I launched into a humorously stammering account of the requirements for pregnancy to occur, trying to sound strong and sure and not pass on any of my hang-ups to her. She listened, head tilted, ballpoint pen dancing back and forth lazily in her hand, as I struggled through embarrassing words like *penis* and *vagina* and *ejaculation* and *semen*, until I was sure she had gotten the idea.

She went back to her crossword puzzle and I to my dish duty. We proceeded in silence for a few hour-long minutes, until thoughts started orbiting about the center of my mind like whizzing planetoids about a collapsing star. I turned back to her and said,

THE FIFTH QUIMESTER

BY DAVID M. FITZPATRICK

ART BY CHRIS KROLCZYK

"Penny... what made you ask me that?"

She looked briefly up over the rims of her glasses and gave one of those pre-teenager half-shrugs. "Cuz I didn't know." Back to the puzzle she went.

It was my duty as a mother, I supposed, to pursue the matter, so I pressed onward. "Of course, honey, but... what sparked the idea?"

She looked back at me, silent, curious, blue eyes studying me. I felt suddenly like a mouse in a cage. She didn't seem about to answer me, so I said, "I mean... are you interested in a boy?"

My heart stopped in anticipation, and so did my breathing, and it seemed a dynasty before she finally took a quick breath and said, "No, mom. I was just wondering how girls get pregnant. Mary Ann Beasley said it's when a boy French kisses you."

The relief was like a two-ton iron hat suddenly antigravitating off my head. I drew in some much needed air and smiled. "Oh, no, Mary Ann Beasley is very wrong. There's much more to it than that."

"It sounds gross," she said, and once again the puzzle was her reality.

Relieved, I returned to the dishes; but, somehow, I still felt like a mouse in a cage.



He came home from school Thursday evening with a sealed envelope containing a note in the neat handwriting of her teacher:

Dear Mrs. Callahan,

Although I am sure it has to do with her recent lack of sleep, and will pass, I thought you should know that Penny has been asking a lot of sexuality-oriented questions. I'm sure there's nothing to be concerned about, but perhaps we could discuss this sometime soon.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Barnes

I called her right away. Penny had failed her first test in two years the day before and had been caught falling asleep at least once a day all week long. I assured her my daughter went to bed at nine every night and slept soundly until seven the next morning, which seemed like enough. Nothing strange had reared its head from my perspective.

It's amazing how we take our own perspective as the whole truth, and never consider the possibility that there's any sort of illusion going on through which we can't see.

The first question had come Tuesday during Science. The class had been discussing how plants reproduce when Penny had raised her hand and said, "People don't reproduce by French kissing," and then launched into the detailed explanation of intercourse as I had explained it to her.

Mrs. Barnes had been surprised; to fend off any upset

parents, she halted Penny's lecture. But that was just the start. Later, Penny had come to her privately and asked whether or not vaginal penetration was painful. Mrs. Barnes had been uneasy, but having known me quite well since my son Sam had been her student years before, gave her a truthful answer.

It didn't stop there. On Wednesday she asked the teacher how long a baby had to grow inside you, followed by the question of how the baby got out. Questions about pain followed that answer. Mrs. Barnes continued uneasily, thinking she would call me if any more questions came up, and certainly make a note to catch me after church on Sunday.

On Thursday morning she wanted to know how a man's penis was shaped, whether it was as long as a twelve-inch ruler, whether it was supposed to have bumps and nubs covering it, and if purple was a normal color. That was when Mrs. Barnes had drawn the line with the questions.

"I told her that she needed to keep questions about sexuality out of school, and that you were the person she should talk to about those things," she told me. "I've known you a while, as well as her, and it didn't seem like anything sinis-

ter – it was really just curiosity. I remember when I was a little girl, I wondered about what penises looked like, and since she was asking so many pain-related questions, it wouldn't be unreasonable for her to have imaginings about the penis being some frightening thing. But I thought you should know."

Of course I should know, but by then I was scared. Cynthia was probably right; it was nothing more than curiosity and nerves. But at eleven? Was my little girl considering doing something with a boyfriend I didn't know about?

Or worse – her description of length and appearance of a penis conjured up images in my mind of some trench coat-clad pedophile in an alleyway showing her some monstrous, diseased organ. The image terrified me beyond all reason. It was something buried inside me, on a level of pure instinct. It was clearly time for another talk.

I found her upstairs in her room, sprawled on her bed doing her math homework and swaying her upraised feet about to the beat of some horrible bubble gum music. She looked up as I entered her room. "Hi, mom."

"Hi, honey," I said, seating myself next to her. "Penny... Mrs. Barnes is concerned about some of the questions you've been asking in school."

"She told me I should ask you those questions," she said innocently. "There's lots I don't know, mom."

"Well, of course there is," I said, relieved a bit to hear her say that. "And you can always ask me or your father anything about sexuality and we'll answer you."

She nodded and went back to her math homework, multiplying fractions. I sat, uneasy, feeling the conversation had been way too abrupt. There was a question I had to ask. I didn't want to hurt her feelings, scare her, or make her think I didn't trust her; but in the end, I'm a mother and a mother has to look out for her children. If she was offended or hurt or anything like that, she'd get over it.

"Penny," I said, forcing stoicism from deep within and sounding as perfectly maternal as possible, "are you planning to have sex with a boy?"

She looked up from her math and said, "No, mom. But did you know that when humans are pregnant, it's for about nine months? They break the months up into three-month periods called trimesters."

"I knew that," I said, not knowing what else to say.

"That's a good fraction problem," she said, and then it

was back to her fractions. I was left once again feeling like something else was watching me – something outside of the illusion, perhaps.

There were no further school incidents, and she didn't ask me anything else. It was I who began asking questions ten months later when I accidentally walked in on her after she had just gotten out of the shower. She had just turned twelve and I knew menstruation was just around the corner, but bloating and water retention be-

damned, her lower abdomen was puffed out like she'd swallowed a football. My heart became slow and heavy, as if pumping cold molasses, as the inevitable thought blasted through my mind. I stood there, frozen, and she covered herself up in embarrassment. "Mom, you *could* knock first, you know."

I stammered through an apology, but once again, some things had to be asked. "Penny... oh my God, honey... are you..." I couldn't even get the words out, but the fact that my eyes hadn't left her midsection, still obvious even though covered by the blue terrycloth of her bath towel, left little to guess. She looked down at herself, as if just noticing the shape, and smiled up at me.

"Geez, mom, chill out. You freak out over *everything*. What did you think, I was *pregnant* or something?"

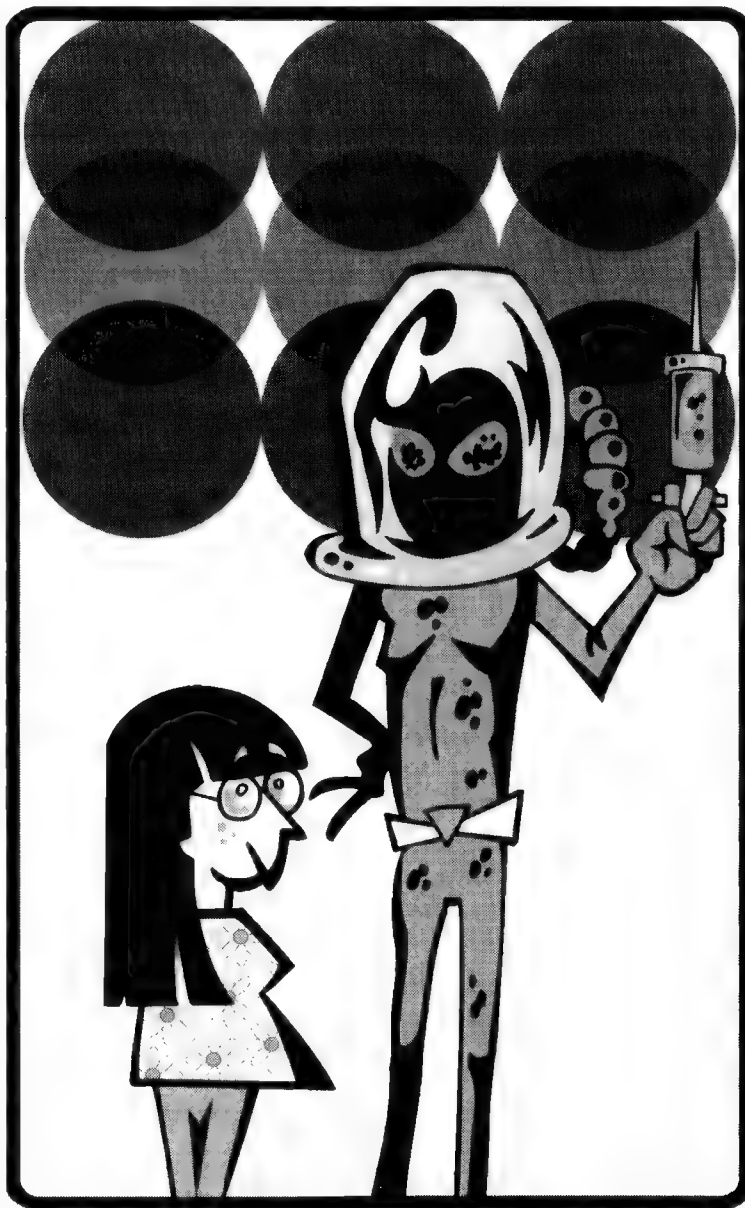
Of course I had thought that! She began to laugh then, tittering like the little girl I knew she was, giggling and covering her mouth with one hand, trying to hang on to the towel with the other. "It's just a little extra weight, mom," she said, adjusting the towel. "I think I'm gonna start my period soon."

I *knew* there was no way she was *that* bloated, cer-

tainly not for her first time. Something was wrong with her. A tumor, perhaps? A hernia? Any number of medical problems flashed through my mind and I gripped the doorknob, trying to keep my balance. I tried to reason with myself and keep the big question out of my mind, but how could I have ignored it?

As if she were reading my mind, her girlish grin vanished and she said solemnly, "Mom, chill out. I am not having sex. I'm just a little sore. Deanna Jenson looked worse than me two weeks ago, but she got her first and she deflated like a balloon. Do you know where the hair spray is?"

* * *



Two more months passed and I found my eyes constantly going to my daughter's middle. She was always a loose clothing person anyway, but when she sat just right I could see the bulge of her gut. One night, my husband and I were getting into bed and he brought the subject up rather succinctly.

"You think that kid is screwing around, don't you?" Jack growled in his inimitable male manner.

"Why on earth do you ask that?" I feigned total surprise.

"She looks pregnant. You're worried she is."

I launched into a pre-rehearsed spiel about bloating and water retention and women's stuff he wouldn't understand and that I'd had plenty of talks with her and everything was all right. It was very unlike him not to lose his mind in a stressful situation, so since he didn't, it was obvious he'd bought it all. I wasn't sure I did.

Month thirteen came and went without so much as a hint of womanhood and Penny had gotten bigger. Not much, not noticeable to anyone else, but I had been watching that middle like a hawk. Why I was doing it, I didn't know. If she said she was celibate, I was sure she was; but I couldn't help but keep thinking the worst. Was I supposed to hold my breath and wait until she crossed the nine-month finish line and dropped a grandchild on us? Forgetting the social problems that would entail, the effects on our entire family, our relationships and everything, would be so traumatic.

Just when I thought it was going to be all right, she began to grow like a pumpkin right before harvest. The fourteenth month after her questions had begun saw her belly double in size. She was solitary, living in her room, not going out with her friends, and the clothing was looser. The size increase was gradual over that month, but one day it struck me that she was a whole lot bigger than she had been a month before. I tried to accidentally walk in on her several times, but she always locked herself in wherever she disrobed. I did what I had to do.

I knocked on her bedroom door and waited until I was granted an audience. She unlocked the door and let me in. She stood there looking at me, wearing her favorite pair of denim overalls – very loose-fitting. It didn't hide her size to my searching eyes.

"Take your overalls off," I ordered without so much as a hello.

She sighed, rolling her eyes. I repeated the order, firmer. She complied, slipping the straps over her shoulders and dropping the outfit around her feet. She lifted her white shirt to show me her belly, now twice the bulge as what it had been before. I felt myself grow nauseous.

"You're blowing this way out of proportion," she said.

"Out of proportion?" I couldn't believe what I was hearing. This was more than a parent's worst nightmare – it was a nightmare within a nightmare. "You are pregnant... and I'm... blowing this out of proportion?" The room was starting to slowly spin and tilt. I was gripping her dresser to support myself.

She pulled her shirt back down and bent over to pull the overalls up, grunting at the strain of bending over with her belly like that. "I told you I wasn't pregnant, mom. It's better than that."

"Better?" I croaked. "How can you sit here and lie to me like this? I've carried three babies, young lady... I know pregnant when I see it. You're pregnant."

She shrugged indifferently, adjusting her glasses on the bridge of her nose. "Okay, you can call it that if you want.

But it isn't the same thing, mom. It's not being pregnant. It's just a science experiment."

Just a science experiment?"

It wasn't the reaction I had expected from her father; I had figured he'd lose his mind. He was known for his quick temper, but I could understand his different reaction on this one. The situation commanded different methods of parenting than either of us were used to; not to mention the raw shock factor alone was enough to make us both blank with emotion.

Jack was strangely calm, for him, as he stood, arms folded, in her bedroom. She sat on her bed, inquisitively watching him. She was disrobed again, down to her yanked-up shirt, belly hanging out over her little-girl pink flowered panties.

"This is extreme, Penny," he said quietly and in control. I had a feeling he was experiencing a mix of wanting to wring her neck coupled with sadness for his little girl. I could empathize. "Perhaps you could explain to your mother what possessed you to do this."

"I didn't have sex with a boy," she said for the fifth time that conversation.

"Then tell your mother what your explanation is. Was it a man?"

"It wasn't a human, it was an alien," she said simply, as if that were the easiest, most believable explanation. The notion sent a wracking shudder up my spine. Nightmares from the darkest sleeps of my life briefly screamed at me, then vanished. My anger took over.

"God damn you, cut that out!" I yelled. "Cut this tabloid shit!"

She shrugged again. "You wanted to know. I was offered right before I got in trouble with Mrs. Barnes for asking questions in school. But he didn't make me do anything. He left the choice up to me and I needed to know more about it before I agreed."

"More about it?" I felt near to collapse.

"He didn't even do it like you said," she said to me, almost accusingly, partly bemusedly. "He did it with something like a long eyedropper. So it didn't hurt at all. But I would have done it the other way 'cuz it would be worth it for the experiment. He said I'd carry the baby for fifteen months. I'm in my last quimester now."

"Quimester?" I echoed.

"Five three-month periods," she explained, almost bored with the questions now. "Most physical growth takes place in these last three months. A lot of brain development humans don't get. That's why they're so much smarter than we are. Can I get dressed now?"

I didn't answer. Jack stared off into nothingness. Penny got dressed. I wondered about perspective and illusions. My perspective was twisted and the illusion was shattered. My daughter had been having sex and was pregnant, and for whatever reason she had made up a bizarre alien story, all matter-of-factly and, possibly, mentally unbalanced.

I pulled her out of school before anyone could notice and immediately found the best psychologist in the city who specialized in adolescent *everything*. Jack understood that these things had to be done. Our insurance wouldn't cover the excessive visits, but we got her in for three two-hour visits a week. After the opening visit, a four-hour ordeal for which we wrote a hefty check for his bulk of time, Dr. Ferris told us that there was no doubt in his mind that Penny believed she had indeed been impregnated by aliens and that she would likely deliver after her fifteenth month. He

was full of recommendations about her psychological treatment, including possible psychiatric hospitalization after the birth of her child; but first and foremost he insisted we take her to an obstetrician that very day to confirm that she was, indeed, pregnant, and that everything was all right. Twelve was so young to be carrying, he said, that any number of things could go wrong and we had to take all precautions.

I took her to the obstetrician. She argued quietly on the way over. "You're only going to scare everybody," she warned us. "No doctor is going to understand this."

The man we saw was the best doctor we could have chosen. Dr. Dale Gavin had been an obstetrician/gynecologist and fertility doctor for forty years and had seen it all. Another healthy check persuaded him to cancel his afternoon appointments and devote his time to Penny. I briefed him on her story, which he regarded with a bemused raised brow, and then he announced a barrage of standard tests he would do.

He started with an ultrasound there in his office. The moment he had a picture on his screen, I could see he was concerned. His eyes went through a virtual dance of movements – first they grew wide, then narrowed, then darkened, then widened again, as he studied the image. Once he looked to Penny, smiling contentedly at him over her big belly as he held the gel-covered paddle there. He finished, telling her to get dressed, while he took me into his office. His face was a creased mask of concern.

"Mrs. Callahan," he said evenly, not quite hiding the worry in his eyes, "we need to do an MRI on your daughter, and right away. This will give us a clear picture of what... is inside her."

"What do you mean?" I said, forcing my voice not to crack. "There's a baby inside her. Is there any doubt of that?"

"Not really," he said. "It's what *kind* of baby that I need to find out. All I can tell you right now is... things aren't normal."

I was too frightened then to ask what he meant.

We went with him to the MRI lab. He knew the head of that department personally, and the two men had a hushed conversation in a quiet corner. Following this, the department head, Jonathan Hughes, abruptly sent the whole department staff home for the day and locked up the MRI unit.

Gavin introduced us and explained that he had detailed Penny's case to the man. The test was to be done without any other staff due to the need to maintain our privacy.

"Your staff doesn't maintain confidentiality on a regular basis?" I asked Hughes, perhaps too curtly.

He didn't have time to answer before Gavin said, "This could be too much to ask of anyone."

"It won't do any good," Penny spoke up from her chair in the waiting area, and we all turned to her. "You'll see it. You'll be frightened. You'll want to get it out. It won't let you."

The MRI unit was state of the art. Penny lay on her back and was slid into the big machine and Hughes told her when to breathe and when to hold her breath. I was in the control room, watching as colored images of layers upon layers of her body were produced, but they didn't look like anything particular to me. It took about forty-five minutes, after which Hughes sent us both to the waiting room. Gavin had explained to me that next stage was to create a three-dimensional representation of the baby – a model, so to speak, something their computers could do with the data obtained by the MRI. The computer would stack the imaged slices and render a model that would be the shape and appearance of the baby growing in my daughter's womb. Her

pubescent, violated womb.

Penny and I sat in the waiting room. The silence was bizarre. I stared at the wall, noting the occasional patient's blurred form on the other side of the foggy window as he realized the door was locked and the center closed. Penny sat next to me, casually reading an issue of *People* magazine. Presently, she said, "You won't take it away from me."

I said, "I don't want to do that."

"You will," she said.

Gavin and Hughes called me alone into the office some time later, grave looks on their faces. Hughes sat behind his desk, Gavin standing behind him. They were looking at a computer screen I couldn't see. "Mrs. Callahan," Hughes began, "your daughter is not only pregnant; she is pregnant with a most bizarre child."

I laughed a little nervous laugh then. "It sounds like you're going to tell me she really is carrying an alien baby."

They returned stony looks that belted the smile off my face. "I'm not sure of the biology," Gavin said quietly, "but something about this child isn't right. The head is extremely large, the limbs very long... six fingers on each hand, six toes on each foot. The eyes are much larger than normal, disproportionately huge on the face..."

I grew so cold. I lowered myself into a chair as Gavin went on. "Other things I noticed before, as well. There are two separate baby heartbeats, but clearly only one... child." He said *child* as if liking the strange way it sounded. "Both hearts... beating in strange triple-beats, sort of like 'da-da-dump, da-da-dump'... about seventy triple-beats a minute for each heart. Sounds like a pair of stampeding horses in there. One heart seems to be responsible for pumping blood, the other for pumping something else. Nutrients or something, who knows."

A thousand things I could say flooded through my spinning brain, but none of them seemed appropriate. I just stared. The tears were trying to come. "She's carrying... a monster?"

"I don't know if that's the case," Gavin said, but he wasn't very convincing. "It's just... vastly different."

Hughes took a breath, leaned forward, swiveled the monitor screen around so I could see.

The three-dimensional model before me rotated on some invisible axis, and at first glance it really looked like any ordinary fetus represented by colored pixels. But when I focused my vision, I could see the size of the head, like the aliens you see sketches of from accounts of abductees; the huge, dark, bug-like eyes that covered much of the face; the limbs, almost spider-like in their length and long, slim digits. It was a baby, surely, but it wasn't human. A truth, one I had been hoping against hope was a fairy tale, finally poured like some thought exodus from my mouth.

"My daughter is pregnant with an alien baby," I whispered aloud. As horrible as it was, as sick as it made me feel, just saying them out loud made me feel like I had finally exorcised some terrible demon from my body.

"And in her fifth trimester," Gavin affirmed. "She's going to give birth in about a month's time, if her account of the way it happens is right – and this baby looks... well, developed enough based on a fifteen-month gestation period."

"What am I supposed to do?" I croaked.

"We keep this a secret," Hughes said stolidly. "Nobody else must find out."

"I have to tell my husband," I said, tears beginning to stream. I was on the edge now, I knew. I couldn't believe I was living this.

"No further than him," Hughes said.

"But what about the baby?"

"That's what worries me," Gavin said. "Your daughter has been right about everything, no matter how outlandish. And what she said before the MRI? She said we'd see it and we'd be frightened. That we'd want to get it out."

"She was right about all of that," Hughes said. He looked very pale and a little ill.

"That's what worries me," Gavin said. "She also said it wouldn't let us."

I took Penny home. My husband was in the living room, watching a World War II documentary on The History Channel. Penny went upstairs as I sat down to talk to him. I related the whole fantastic tale to him. He never flinched, never lost control of his jaw, never had his eyes bulge out of his head. When I was finished, he said, "We can't tell anyone about this, Meg. We need to... take her to the lake to have this baby. Then we'll figure out what to do."

"I thought... we should consider an abortion," I said.

He stopped cold at this, staring at me. "You've always been very pro-life."

"I'm not this time. You didn't see that thing. And you've always been pro-choice."

"But I've never had a twelve year-old daughter pregnant with an alien baby," he said solemnly. "She's not a little girl anymore. It's her decision, too."

"Not for this," I said shakily. "It's a monster, for Christ's sake. These alien bastards have used her for some experiment and I think it's sick. We need to decide for her on this."

He said softly, "Maybe this is... something special, and we just don't know it yet." He changed the channel to HBO and was immediately engrossed in some Arnold Schwarzenegger action flick, as if I hadn't just come home and told him his little girl was pregnant with an alien baby.

And so the day got stranger: my husband's way of dealing with the stress and utter weirdness of it. I nodded in reservation and left him alone with his thoughts, knowing that my daughter wasn't going to have that baby.

Dr. Gavin called me first thing in the morning. He and Hughes had spent most of the night going over the MRI information, checking the child out intricately in the three-dimensional model, and reviewing test results. The baby was not human, not by any stretch beyond the most basic appearance and biology – bipedal, iron-based blood, apparently an air breather, and organs generally performing the same basic functions. The final conclusion they reached, sometime around five in the morning, was that

Penny was in no danger. Gavin wanted to know what we wanted to do. I told him I wanted my daughter to have an abortion.

"I can understand your concern," he said gently, his tired voice full of the all-nighter he had pulled, "but please consider the options. Whether we like or accept this or not, Penny was chosen to carry one of their children. For what reason, we don't know. But they chose her, maybe for some grand first contact olive branch."

"That isn't my concern," I said vehemently. "They had no right to do it in the first place. They never asked my permission."

"They didn't need you. They asked her."

"She's a child!"

"To you, with your cultural, religious, and social beliefs," he said. "To them, she was most likely a fertile woman. Probably in the cusp of her first menstruation, thus ovulating and ready to carry a child. Ultimately, she's an adult in the

biological sense of the word. And they asked her, and she agreed. From what Dr. Ferris and you have told me of her story, she asked a lot of questions from you and her teacher before giving her go-ahead to the aliens."

"Go-ahead?" I couldn't believe what I was hearing. "A child just can't make that kind of decision, agreeing to have intercourse with an alien!"

"From our point of view, no. But I can tell you there has been no penetration, certainly not by anything large. Her hymen is completely intact. I'd imagine they'd have performed artificial insemination. Her early worries of male size and pain were likely the result of her misunderstanding about the process by which they were

going to impregnate her. Didn't she say they used something like a long eyedropper?"

I had to sit down. My knees were wobbly yet again. "She's not going to have this baby," I said with quivering resolve. "I won't allow it."

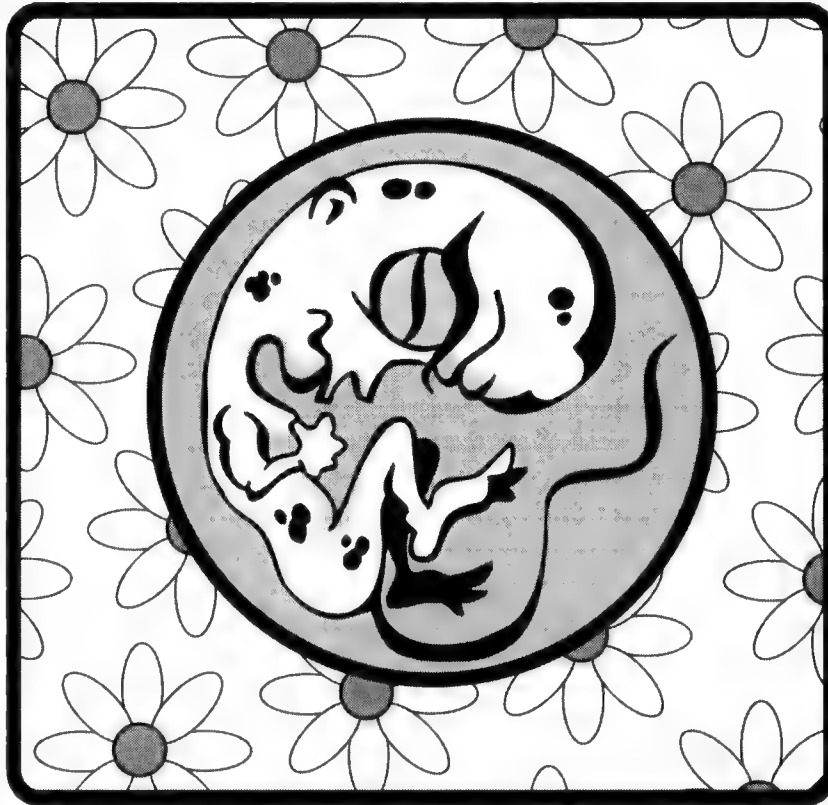
"Then our only option is to perform a Caesarean section and remove the fetus," he said. "I suspect, however, that the child will live at this stage. If you're hoping the child will be destroyed, I'm afraid we can't do that, Mrs. Callahan."

"Why not?"

"I'm a doctor, Mrs. Callahan. My oath applies not only to human beings but any life forms. I have to keep this child alive."

"I'm sure you didn't preach that the last time you swatted a mosquito," I said coldly; maybe a little too coldly.

He was silent for a moment. "This is very different. This is a sentient being, carried by your daughter for some special reason. I'm sorry you don't agree. But I understand your po-



sition, and if your husband changes his mind, let me know and we can proceed with the C-section."

"My husband agrees with me," I lied.

He was silent again, and when he spoke his words were broken. "I don't want to start any arguments between you two, but I should tell you your husband called me this morning. He was very clear that abortion was not an option. He wants your daughter to carry the child to term."

I found my husband in his basement workshop. He had nearly finished the cradle. It was exceptionally long for an infant, but then Dr. Gavin had made it clear that the child had very long legs. He was sanding down the edges as I stood there at the base of the stairs, not quite knowing what to say. He looked up to me with a rueful smile.

"I had to call him," he said without anything from me first. "I strongly believe she should have the baby."

"She won't," I said.

He sighed and set his sandpaper down, brushed his hands off on his canvas apron. "Honey, she isn't the first to be contacted by aliens. Based on the tabloids, she's not the first to carry an alien child. Do you have any alien memories, Meg?"

"Of course not!" I was beginning to suspect his mind was more than a little stressed over this situation. This was the man who exploded when Penny had brought home a 'D' in English last year. The man who lost his temper when her older sister was caught necking with a boy in his car in our driveway. The man who had whipped my son black and blue for calling me a bitch. He was a good man, a strong man, a fair man, but not a man who put up with anything like this. "How the hell can you ask me that?"

He smiled. "I don't know. Hell, maybe I have and I don't remember. Maybe a lot more of have been abducted. Maybe they're friendly... maybe it's an honor or something. Maybe we need to kinda roll with this one, honey. Maybe..."

I realized as he rambled on aimlessly that he was in shock. Everyone was going insane around me, and I really needed to as well; but somebody had to keep it all together. The only logical choice was to end the discussion neutrally for the time being, call Dr. Ferris, and somehow talk Jack into seeing the man.

Then, he seemed to understand me. He said, "Honey, I know this is tough. Dr. Gavin said they couldn't kill the baby, and I don't want that to happen either; but if you don't want Penny to carry to term, then that's what we'll do. As soon as possible."

We packed Penny up in the car and headed to Gavin's office that evening. He'd made it clear that we would have to break the rules on this one — no using hospital facilities. We couldn't do a C-section in the maternity ward delivery room with nurses standing around when this alien creature came out of her. I was concerned about sterility, but Gavin assured me his exam room was often used for a variety of in-patient surgeries, and that we would have Penny admitted to the hospital the next day if any hint of complications arose. Jack drove us there, unconcerned and contemplative.

"Where are we going?" Penny asked warily from the back seat. I could see her with a half-turn of my head, a tiny little girl-woman, barely five feet tall, with a belly the size of a beach ball.

"Dr. Gavin's," I answered, and found I couldn't look her in the eye and so turned back to watch the road. We would get her there, knock her out, do the deed, and deal with her when

it was over.

Jack suddenly said, "Your mother wants the baby out of you, Penny"

I couldn't believe he had told her. We had agreed on keeping it a secret. I shot him a vicious look that he ignored, content to just drive and leave the hard stuff to me.

Penny said firmly, "It's not gonna happen, mom."

"Yes, it is," I said even more firmly. "It doesn't matter what you want in this situation."

"It doesn't matter to me either way," she said matter-of-factly. "But the baby needs to go full-term and deliver naturally. It's all part of their experiment."

"I don't care what they want."

"That's fine, but I'm telling you they won't let it happen."

We finished the trip almost in silence. We made it to the hospital and parked close to Gavin's office. As Jack turned the engine off, Penny spoke again, her voice shaking a bit now. "Dad, she's gonna make me do it."

"It's okay, honey," he said soothingly.

"She wants it out of me."

"It's okay."

"She *can't*."

"I know," he said. "Let's go."

Gavin let us into the building, as it was locked for the evening. He led us to the elevator and we headed up. On the way, Gavin said, "Your son and daughter are already upstairs."

"What?" I was ever more incredulous. "Why did you call them? They didn't need to know about this. What gave you the idea we would possibly want them to..." I trailed off as the obvious hit me, and looked to Jack. He shrugged indifferently as Gavin tried to look like something other than a traitor once again.

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"I thought they should know," Jack said simply. "Like it or not, this baby is blood to us. The kids had a right to know."

We arrived in the office to find Hughes there, talking with our other kids. Melody was nineteen, just in her first year of college, tall and willowy, truly drop-dead gorgeous to behold. Her high school years had been spent fending off daily suitors in lust with her wispy form, blond hair, and hazel eyes. Her brother, Sam, was of the same eye and hair color, very athletic and solid at twenty-three. They regarded us as we came in, and I felt myself heating up with embarrassment, as if the situation were somehow my fault.

Gavin reviewed everything so far, from Penny's alien contact the year before to her fifteen-month gestation to the tests that had confirmed she was carrying an inhuman child. Melody and Sam listened with complete equanimity, as if taking it all in for a science experiment of their own. Melody was only in her first year, but genetics was her ultimate career goal, and Sam was well on his way towards a master's in physics; so their interest could well have been scientific. I guess I was hoping for a more emotional reaction about their sister's predicament, at least from Melody, so I wouldn't be the only hysterical person in the middle of all this. Even Penny was taking it like a trooper, almost like she wanted it all to happen. I guess at this stage I was accepting that was the case with her.

I was lost in my thoughts on this when I heard Gavin wrapping up his speech. "...so we're going to go over the biology of this pregnancy, and what we can expect when she delivers in just a few weeks."

That wasn't why we were here. Obviously, Jack had been sabotaging things again. I jumped in. "Dr. Gavin, I don't know what my husband has been telling you, but my daughter is not carrying this child to term. I want it removed tonight."

He looked helplessly over to Jack. I whirled on my husband before he could argue. "Don't even think about it, Jack. I'll call the cops and get a court order. Any judge hearing this story and seeing the evidence won't hesitate."

"You'd need proof," he said calmly.

"Dr. Gavin is my proof, and so is Dr. Hughes," I said fiercely.

"I don't think so," he said.

I looked to Gavin. He and Hughes were side by side across the room, arms folded defensively, regarding me with touches of fear on their faces. "You're on his side," I said. "You're going to do it his way."

"Please understand, Mrs. Callahan," Gavin said, "this is the opportunity of our medical careers, of our lives. We want to see the baby born naturally. The girl wants to go through it. The legal father is demanding that we proceed."

I was up out of my chair, heading for the door. I knew Penny wouldn't go with me. "You're all crazy. This isn't going to happen like this. I'll blow this open to protect my daughter—"

Sam and Melody, standing by the door sidestepped to bar my exit, and I almost ran into them. "Mom, relax," Sam said.

"You relax!" I said shrilly. "Now move! The both of you!"

Neither of them moved. Clearly, I was the minority here. It was a conspiracy, the doctors for their medical ends, my husband because of some mental instability that made him think this baby was the second coming, my daughter because of some maternal instinct run rampant, and my other children for morbid scientific curiosity.

I glared at Jack. "She might have this child, but she won't keep it. Not after I file for divorce and get custody of her."

"The legal father wants her to have the child," Gavin re-

peated.

"And I say he won't be the legal father for long," I hissed. "I'll get temporary custody right after I file separation papers—"

"It has nothing to do with my legality as Penny's father," Jack said.

"That's right," I said vehemently.

"It has to do with my legality as the child's father," Jack said with a smile, "and you can't challenge that legality."

My head swam as my brain digested this line. A hundred terrible images flared across my mind. "What?" I croaked.

His smile was only wider. "This child is a science experiment, remember? Genetically engineered to look like my species, unlike the first three who were engineered to look like yours."

Tunnel vision began closing in around my eyes, and my head was spinning. The world was collapsing around me. "What... what are you..."

"I told you," he said. "Think really hard... search those lost memories..."

Images flashed through my mind, dusty memories of a silver ship... a man who told me how he had been altered to look like a human... him explaining it all to me... I asked questions, then ultimately agreed... then he inseminated me with a genetically engineered, fertilized egg... later, my memories buried, left behind in the farthest reaches of my mind just as he had been left behind on Earth by his people, with a few other disguised members of his race, all part of a great science experiment...

I turned, swayed, looked to my older children. They smiled at me, like their father, and they sure *looked* human; had fooled me, and all the doctors, for nineteen and twenty-three years...

"I told you they wouldn't let it happen, mom," Penny said, but her voice was far away. "And I *want* it to happen..."

I staggered, fell over... Melody and Sam were there to catch me, and vaguely I felt them carrying me over to the table, laying me down. Melody was telling me it was all right, that she still loved me, that nothing had changed... but everything had. Then I felt the needle in my arm, and the world began to go from spinning and black to comfortably numb and paralyzed.

"Our experiment was a success," Jack was saying. He was looking down at me, his smiling face wavering like a reflection in rippling water above me. "She'll deliver a healthy child of my race..."

"Nooo..." I was drooling, and couldn't help it.

"Yes. The next step is to create a true hybrid. I love you, honey, but guess what?"

I tried to say 'what' but it was just a slurred 'wwhhuu.'

"We don't need laboratory stuff any longer. With a mutagen applied to by sperm to allow adaptability, it will all be easy. You're going to learn a little more about motherly love, honey... you're the next step. I'm off all the reproductive suppressants, and now we're going to conceive that hybrid here, together, tonight..."

I couldn't move, couldn't speak, couldn't scream out in terror, but I could feel as he lovingly held my hand and caressed my thigh. In my mind, I screamed, long and piercing, but only I felt it or cared.

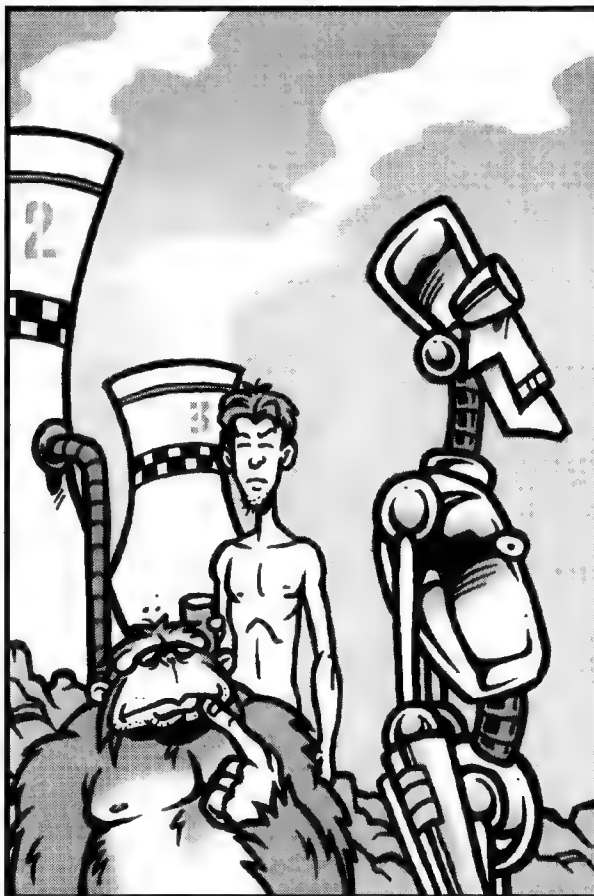
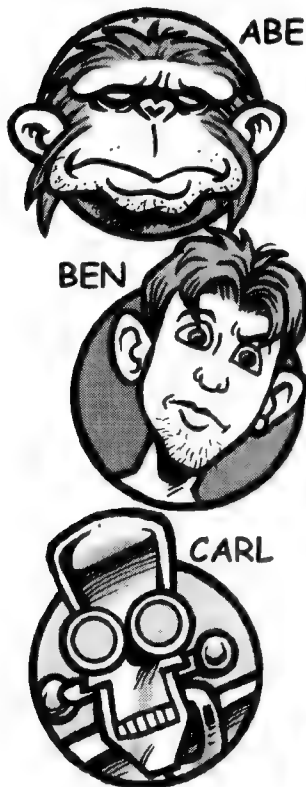
BQ

David M. Fitzpatrick, known as "Indy" to most, was himself conceived as the consequence of bizarre alien experiments.
www.brutarian.com/aboutbq/fitzpatrickdavid.htm

Chris Krolczyk is the alien who abducted him.
www.chriskro.com

THE THINKING APE BLUES by Mark Poutenis

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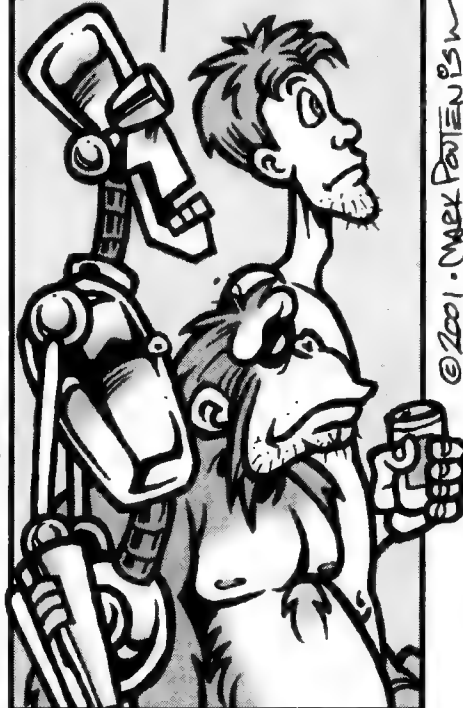
HAHA!! I got you sorry Pavlovian bastards GOOD!! I was staring at nothing! Man, the old saying is right... nothing attracts a crowd like a crowd... SUCKERS!!



Clouds are pretty.
That one looks like a nekkid chick.



Ooooooooooh...
I like boobies.



Billy Joe Bob Thorbriggs' WHAT'S HOT!

Hey-ho, waddaya know! Billy Joe Bob Thorbriggs here, ready to review some yee-hawin' good shit out there, whether it be movies, television, video games, products, travel, magazines, or music! BJBT covers 'em all in true Brutarian fashion! That's right — yer gonna LOVE my perspective on EVERYTHING!

MOVIES

THE LAST WORD: JURASSIC PORK

Yesiree, just what we needed — another *Jurassic Park* sequel! Lucky for us, the grand mind of Steven Spielberg isn't willin' to give up even after the first sequel sucked by comparison! Hell, I'll be there on openin' day with my rubber dinosaur costume on tellin' chicks sittin' nearby how I'd like to play velociraptor and suck on their popcorn kernels — except I'm sure they'll all be glued to the screen for this one. Wantin' to do away with the dinos once and for all, a team moves in to slaughter the beasts and sell them on the black market for obscene prices. Can Jews eat that shit anytime, Stevie?

STAR WHORES THE MEN'S PHANTASY

Word has it our intrepid heroes find their way to Coarsecunt, a planet that is one gigantic brothel. Obi-Wand Ke-Knobbi uses the Force to ravage a beauty from across the room, R6-D9 gets all the love he wants through a stimulatn' connection with a standard Imperial linkup port, Queer-Gon Djinn's ghost has amazin' astral sex with a talented Huttese girl (he likes those big chicks), and several women finally realize that Jar Jar Wanks — and his long tongue — are good for somethin'. Reportedly, Anniekin shies away from the countless women on Coarsecunt, pinin' instead for Amilala. No wonder he ends up with a mask on later in life. I'd hide my face, too. Talk about whipped!

STAR BLECH: GERIATRICATIONS

YEAH, BABY! Thank the gods the plotlines aren't gettin' too old for these gems! And who says the original series cast ain't too old fer this shit? Seems ol' Kirk is comin' back again! Like we didn't see THAT comin'! He'll team up with Captain Picard — Picard will actually command the *Enterprise*, but Kirk will be singin' Priceline.com commercials to try to enlist fresh blood into Starfleet! Gotta wonder if it will work... anyway, Spock and Data find a friendship — no more of those homosexual references, you guys! — and DeForest Kelley puts in a cameo. He looks the best of all of them, which is pretty amazin' since he's been dead for two years.

LOWLANDER

The original movie was a cult classic and perfectly done. The sequels, as any die-hard fan knows, were just plain stupendous works of art, although there was this minor little inconvenience where they seemed to completely contradict everything laid out in the first movie. So did the TV series. But hey, who the hell really cares, right? I mean, good watchin' is good watchin'; who needs logic and continuity in a fictional universe anyway? Well, the producers always felt that way about the franchise, so now comes a new installment, where bad-asses travel back in time and make it so that none of the previous movies and series ever happened at all! Now they can start all over from scratch — and they've cast Leonardo DiCaprio as Connor MacLeod! And Freddie Prinze Jr. as Duncan MacLeod! And Sean Penn as Ramirez! And Rosie O'Donnell as The Kurgan! And Carrot Top and Tom Green as two of the swords! Does this whip ass, or WHAT? I bet I'll see you at the cineplex on openin' night!

TELEVISION

JEALOUSY!

Alex Trebek has been reputedly bored as hell with the has-been Jeopardy! game show he's been hostin', so now it's time to fuel the fire a bit to compete with more popular shows like *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* And *Weakest Link*. The result? Jealousy!, a show which works like Jeopardy! but features contestants recycled from *Jerry Springer*. Answers like "She slept with my husband and fathered her own sister" require contestants to respond in the form of a question as in, "Who is my daughter?" Final Jealousy involves a free-for-all, winner take all. A sure-fire hit!

FARSCAPE

Yeah, okay, so I have a lot of sci-fi stuff goin' on here. So I like that sorta thing — gimme a break! Well, thank the good gods for this sweet gem of a television show, screamin' out across the cable waves on the Sci-Fi Channel. Never since

Babbleon 5 has a show aspired to have the look and feel of *Star Blech* and succeeded so beautifully! Wisely, these good ol' boys did away with unimportant things like characterization, plot, story, and quality actin' and concentrated on what really matters in a series: special effects and cool costumes. Certainly this'll be around for another dozen seasons. Yee-haw, man!

The Twilight Zany

They tried bringin' this one back in the 80s but failed, probably because Rod Serling was dead and the remakes just weren't no good without him. But now they've hit on a good idea! Instead of weird endings to strange tales, they're gonna do wacky slapstick comedy pieces with hilarious endings! In the same way that weird tales with twist endings have come to be known as "Twilight Zone-ish," from here forth sitcoms with hilarious endings will surely be known as "Twilight Zany-ish." Rod Serling is surely cheerin' in his grave!

VIDEO GAMES

QUAKE XXV: THUMB WRESTLING

Who says these 3D shooter video game designers are runnin' outta themes to base their shit on? Not the folks at id Software, that's fer sure! This planned installment to the successful series brings to your computer screen what could only be done better without a computer: thumb wrestling! I'm a little bugged that they didn't do us justice and call it "rasslin'" but I think I'll live. This one will be more than just yer basic thumb rasslin'; you'll be able to choose from 27 different styles of thumbs includin' my favorite, the Toon Hit With Hammer Thumb. Nobody'll out-thumb ya with that bad boy!

PUNK-MAN

Those Namco boys are at it again. In this version, Punk-Man runs around eatin' up various illegally-acquired prescription medications while bein' pursued by four ugly bastards who'd like to bust a cap in his happy ass. Every now and then, Punk-Man gets a big pill that seems to be like a big frickin' speed or somethin', and he whips some ass. Along the way, there are back doors to poke through, acid-laced fruits to eat, and a few cherries to pop. Best of all, Punk does it all on a skateboard while wearing pants you could fit three rhinos into! And he even wears a backwards cap and has blond-frosted hair. You can never have too much of this little guy! Early rumor has a Ms. Punk-Man version comin' out, where the Lady herself is a crack whore bein' pursued through the streets of Los Angeles by a shitload of Punk-Men.

PRODUCTS

Snarlboro Mega Light 1000's

New variety! After addin' like a hundred deadly chemicals, these guys have gone in and then removed them to make these smokes safer. To top it off, they've added a three-inch filter and cut the length of the tobacco part down by half. As if that wasn't civic-minded enough for them, they've added a skull and crossbones to the front of the pack and changed the Surgeon General's warnin' to "DO NOT SMOKE THESE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES!" Finally, in the bravest and most sensible move of all, that cut-down tobacco part I talked about no longer contains tobacco. It contains tiny shreds of solid oxygen-nitrogen. You're smokin' air! Obviously, this was a move necessitated by the recent loss in court by Big Tobacco, which is naturally fully justified because there is no way the smokers are in any way at fault for killin' themselves. Snarlboro recognizes this, and is doin' what is right by sellin' burnable oxygen-nitrogen smokes to everybody. Probably, in about fifty years, somebody will figure out that it's the same thing as breathin' and there will be a class-action lawsuit to punish these guys for chargin' for somethin' that would otherwise be free, and... well, why assume the worst.

Cocaine Cola

Anyone who has ever wondered about Coke's secret formula need only to check the history books. Somethin' about the original drink bein' formulated by a pharmacist usin' a certain plant now in lots of trouble in Columbia. Theoretically, the drinkers got hooked from some reason other than great taste. Years after removin' some of those stimulin' ingredients, it seems Coke is lookin' to market a newer version in hopes of grabbin' the younger crowd. I'm guessin' they'll grab 'em with this one. Grab 'em by the ears and shake their whole tremblin' bodies for about twenty solid minutes per snort — or should I say *swallow*.

TRAVEL

Hollerday Inn

Hey, I don't know about you, but this recent advertisin' campaign for Hollerday Inn Expresses that's out — the one where some complete dimwit saves the day, outshinin' all the brains around him — doesn't insult my intelligence at all. In fact, I am so taken by the notion that I'm a damn genius just because I have the common sense to stay in a Holiday Inn Express instead of payin' less at a better Motel 6 that I'm gonna

sleep in one tonight just because there's one in my town!

HOLLYWOOD

Seems Billy Graham, Jerry Falwell, Oral Roberts, Jesse Jackson, and Jimmy Carter have seen eye-to-eye enough to pool their resources and buy up Hollywood. Their plan: to bring the Good Word to the world through this focal point of culture and civilization. Renamin' it Holywood, their first aim is to ensure the movie studios only produce quality, moral, Christian movies. Certain movies will be immediately recalled and destroyed. "Like that goddam *Last Temptation of Christ*," Falwell was heard sayin'. "Blasphemous shit is all it is." Their next project: The Sodom and Gomorrah of the Modern World, Las Vegas. Word has it fallen angel Jim Bakker will head up that bit includin' an immediate renamin'. Why? Bakker was heard to proclaim "Because it means 'the vagina' in Mexican." I LOVE this guy!

MAGAZINES

THE NEW YANKER

Realizin' that New York is a former epicenter of Yankee everything — and I mean Revolutionary War, not baseball — this quality magazine is finally comin' to grips with the 21st century and realizin' what made this country great. That's right — every issue will feature somethin' about masturbation. And we all know this country was made great by millions of jerkoffs, so how more appropriate can you get?

Sports Illustrated

The all-new comic-art version of SI is comin' out! It seems that it was determined that the average reader of SI is a low-IQ sports nut who thinks he has a Master's in football and can't read 93% of the written material; they tended to just look at the pictures. Capitalizin' on that, SI is now goin' to an all-toon version of everything *includin'* the swimsuit issue! If you thought nipples and cracks were obvious before, wait til these guys use their caricaturist skills to enhance those notable features.

TYME

Recently bought by A-O-Hell, Tyme is now doin' somethin' to reflect its new image. Still in a weekly format, Tyme will have color-coded tabs for ease of use in findin' different sections; no words will be longer than three syllables; it won't fit on any standard magazine stand shelves and will require special shelves; and will cater only to the extremely stupid. Sounds like a reasonable idea to me! Under the new design, the first Person of the Year is reported to be the little yellow guy you see runnin' around the Instant Messenger program.

PLAY-BOY

Hugh Hefner died last week and this classic magazine is finally changin' for the better. The interview of the issue will be closer to twenty pages and contain no off-color topics, bein' conducted with someone involved in the world of finance, investment, etc. The centerfold will be double-sized and feature the interviewed individual. Finally — and this is the move sure to sell more copies to the proper target audience — all the pictorials will feature clothed women, since international playboys aren't interested in nude women anyway. They want classy women dressed elegantly. Hey, seems like a brave move to me, but who am I to say? So long as I still have plenty of pink bein' spread in Hustler and Genesis...

MUSIC

ALUMINUM MAIDEN THE LETTER OF THE NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR OF THE BUDDY OF THE BEAST

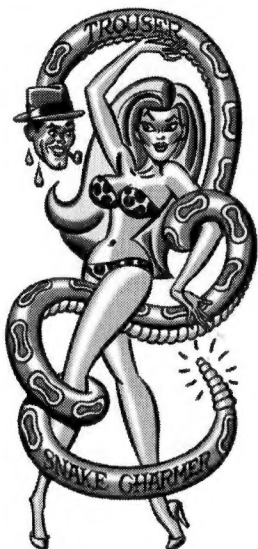
Who the hell said these guys are has-beens?! Just because they've released somethin' like seven thousand albums in the past eighty years doesn't mean anything. Just because they haven't broken out with anything soundin' any different in a few decades doesn't mean anything either — hey, it's the Maiden sound! And I understand some folks think that the only redeemin' quality of Maiden recently has been the always-kickin'-ass cover art featurin' Eddy. Not true — cuz even that has sucked on occasion lately! Check out this new CD — and don't just play random stuff from your existin' stack of Maiden shit since there ain't much difference; if yer a true Maiden fan, you'll run out and pay a stack of cash for this just because it's NEW suckage!

METALHEADICA FUCK THE FAN

Who says these guys don't kick ass? And who says that just because Lars Ulrich is a vindictive, pompous, anti-Napster, anti-MP3 bastard that they aren't entitled to control the entire music industry? After all, it only makes sense that anyone downloadin' an MP3 of one of their songs MUST be a criminal who doesn't own a CD or tape copy already, who clearly could never have spent thousands of dollars on CDs, tapes, T-shirts, concert tickets, and so on. There can't be anyone who downloads their songs who legally is entitled to have a digital copy of a song they already have. Hell, no! I can see where Lars' logic comes into play! Clearly ALL downloaders are vicious criminals and Lars will suffer because of it. So this new CD ought to put things right!

BQ

Billy Joe Bob Thorbriggs is spiritually channeled from the afterlife through the mind of David "Indy" Fitzpatrick.



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M.O.C.
'01



The Horrific Contributors

Hey, gang! Welcome to your free *Brutarian Contributors Super Silliness Game*! All you need are five six-sided dice! Roll them and add up the numbers to randomly generate a number from 5-30, which will determine where you read next! It's a lot of fun! Probably not if you don't know all the contributors very well! But it's mildly amusing in a prepubescent boy sort of way! If you don't have dice, you can randomly choose your next target with an index finger and closed eyes! Or just read straight through! Or skip this entirely!

- [05] **John Adamian**, who is a writer. He did the great interview with Chris Strachwitz. But we know it wasn't really HIM... his BODY was there, but it had been occupied by a malevolent alien force known as...
- [06] **Ernesto de Pascale**, a foreign dude who lent his Bob Mosley interview to John Oliver. John is used to doing epic interviews and didn't have one with Mosley, so Ernesto delivered his version to John via fleet-footed personal messenger...
- [07] **Ozzy Fide**, who is a figment of his own imagination, or at the very least a very bad dream of the rest of us, was certainly spawned by a nightmare once experienced by...
- [08] **David "Indy" Fitzpatrick**, who lays out the magazine and maintains the Web site, as well as does the regular *Surge Engine* column and wrote for our Cool Horror Fiction issue, is secretly in love with...
- [09] **GAK**, a man who can make three letters mean so much. GAK is an artist without a true name, but we have it on good authority that he is currently on an expedition to find his true name deep in the jungles of South America, with help from...
- [10] **Greg Goodsell**, who used to contribute to *Brutarian* once upon an eon ago, but evidently he was kidnapped by aliens and forced to refrain from doing so for quite some time. Luckily, he was rescued by intergalactic superhero...
- [11] **Yonkel Horowitz**, who could be anybody but since the layout guy wasn't told who he is, there won't be any guesses here. We'll just assume he's always sneaking into bar mitzvahs for free food with none other than...
- [12] **Gerard Houarner**, a talented writer with hundreds of published short stories who contributed to our Cool Horror Fiction Issue. Gerard edits *Space and Time* magazine, where he has to constantly reject alien abduction stories submitted by...
- [13] **Kathryn A. Kopple**, who is a professional writer and reviewer who damn near killed that Salemi guy for inadvertently excising some material during his crazed editing last issue. No doubt she will take her revenge out on...
- [14] **Chris Krolczyk**, who by day is a mild-mannered independent professional artist, but by night he dons a pink Lycra bodysuit and parades the crime-filled streets of Michigan, with his trusty, mint green Lycra-wearing sidekick...
- [15] **Bentley Little**, a world-famous horror author who has contributed to our Cool Horror Fiction Issue. We don't know him very well, so we hope he won't be too upset when we reveal that he was once the Jell-O Wrestling Tag Team partner of...
- [16] **James MacLaren**, who is a whup-ass surfer dude in Florida, which we think looks like a flaccid penis hanging off the end of the country. And pointing at Cuba, by some strange twist of fate. We think Jim wants to invade Cuba with...
- [17] **Stately Wayne Manor**, who is the World's Most Conceited Man and a long-time columnist with this rag. Stately feels he is the greatest mortal ever to grace the planet he allowed God to create, but we all know he is inferior to the one and only...
- [18] **Bruno Nadalin**, who is a slightly insane artist, just the way we like 'em. He recently escaped from a psychiatric ward for the criminally insane after doing our cover, undoubtedly to kidnap and molest...
- [19] **John Oliver**, a regular staff member of *Brutarian* and reputedly on the level of assistant editorship. His contributions to the magazine over the years, along with his broad intellect, make him the best possible submissive sex slave for...
- [20] **James Osterhout**, a very funny artist with comics that'll keep anyone on This Side of Insanity laughing his ass off. It's too bad that he is limited by the locked doors in the asylum, where he shares a steel-doored cell with...
- [21] **Mark Poutenis**, estranged Art Director for this magazine. Mark does his famed Thinking Ape Blues strips, featuring a robot named Carl, a naked human named Ben, and an ape named...
- [22] **Elise Soroka**, who is an amazingly original artist from the D.C. area. Her use of props and photography along with digital editing makes her the most worthwhile candidate to be the lifelong partner of...
- [23] **Gene Stewart**, who has been a regular contributor for some time, and made his debut with his column *Rat Stew* in this issue. This column will soon be found regularly on our Web site, which will be visited and masturbated over by...
- [23] **Steve Rasnic Tem**, a master of fiction, who contributed his craft to our Cool Horror Fiction issue. His publications are legion, but the fiction thing is only a front. His real goal is world domination, and he plans to rule with his lieutenant...
- [24] **Paul Toth**, who is a talented writer with a knack for taking sublime topics and making them devastatingly interesting. No doubt his inspiration comes from hours a day spent exploring his genitalia with none other than...
- [25-30] **Dom Salemi**, who is always listed out of alphabetical order at the end, because he feels that much more important than everyone. He really should appear at the top of this list, hand in hand with his secret leather-bound gimp named...

Errata

Issue #32 had a few glitches. Well, big shock, huh? **Danny Hellman** was credited with the cover art, and although he originally had, a last-minute change had **Chris Krolczyk** filling in. Chris threatened to kill us. So please let him know you have been informed! ... **MacFarland** was the only name we had available for an artist, and we joked about wanting to know his name; that would be **Matt MacFarland**, a fine point we'd have figured out if we'd bothered to visit his Web site which was so prominently referenced on one of his pieces ... Readers got the impression that **Dom Salemi** was some Great and Powerful Oz or something. He's not. He's an idiot. But he writes our paychecks. So we let him believe that. You should, too ... *Brutarian* is NOT going to become a weekly publication; hell, no... we can barely get four issues a year out without killing each other. But if you want to advertise on a weekly basis and pay us up front, we'll gladly rethink our strategy!



The Dirty Danny Legal Defense Fund PO Box 428 Old Chelsea Station New York, NY 10113-0428

A QUICK AND HIGHLY-OPINIONATED SKETCH OF THE RALL V. HELLMAN LAWSUIT By Danny Hellman

The Rall v. Hellman lawsuit has gotten a modest amount of coverage in the press, (articles have appeared in the New York Press, The New York Observer, the Village Voice, and The Comics Journal), but for those of you who aren't unfamiliar with the case, I'll attempt a brief explanation:

On August 3rd, 1999, the Village Voice published a feature story written by cartoonist and journalist Ted Rall, in which he made wild and unsubstantiated claims that legendary cartoonist Art Spiegelman holds the New York publishing world in some sort of tyrannical grip, making success for any aspiring cartoonist or illustrator impossible without first having to kiss the master's ring. As a moderately successful New York-based illustrator myself, who has never had any contact whatsoever with Art Spiegelman, I immediately saw Rall's thesis to be false.

And I was just one of many who were appalled by this specious hatchet job. When Russ Smith, the publisher of the New York Press wrote an editorial

criticizing Rall's Voice feature, I was overjoyed to contribute the accompanying illustration, which depicted Rall as a small dog urinating on a bronze statue of the Pulitzer Prize-winning MAUS author. In hindsight, I wish I'd let that illustration be the final expression of my disgust with Rall's anti-Spiegelman slam-piece, but I let my strong feelings about the Voice feature get the better of me.

I felt that Rall's nose required a little additional tweaking, and unfortunately decided to play a small e-mail prank on him. The now-infamous "Ted Rall's Balls" prank involved my writing of a parodic statement under Rall's name, which I e-mailed to a list of approximately thirty friends and acquaintances in the comics community, as well as to Rall himself. I then followed up the first message with faked angry responses, which seemed to be coming from famous figures in the publishing industry. (the complete text of the prank can be found at my website: www.dannyhellman.com)

I maintain that this prank was utterly harmless; the virtual

equivalent of a "whoopie cushion". Sensitive soul that he is, Rall declared the prank to be anything but harmless.

Within 48 hours of the start of the prank, I received letters from Rall's lawyers demanding a retraction, and apology, and \$20,000 in financial compensation. I immediately complied with Rall's request for both the apology and retraction, (the apology is also up at my website for public inspection). I felt that Rall's insistence on financial compensation was both ridiculous and opportunistic, so I initially declined to offer any cash.

Within days, I discovered that Rall had filed a lawsuit against me in the New York State Supreme Court, charging me with Libel, Libel Per Se, Injurious Falsehood Invasion of Privacy, and Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress. The amount of damages asked for in the suit was \$1.5 million dollars; a figure that I am sure you will agree is both outrageous and laughable. It was at this point that I offered Rall's lawyer a \$1000 settlement; apparently this was not the fig-

ure they'd had in mind.

Subsequently, I had no choice but to retain my own lawyer to defend myself, and my bleak march towards bankruptcy began.

It's now been over five months since Rall filed his lawsuit against me, and as you might imagine, my financial situation is getting desperate. I've paid over \$11,000.00 out of pocket in legal expenses; an additional \$7000 which we raised at a benefit concert last December has ALSO been spent on legal fees. We are currently organizing a second benefit concert, as well as a benefit comic book, in order to raise public awareness of the case, as well as much-needed cash.

I don't know if any of you have ever been on the receiving end of a lawsuit; those of you who have understand what an emotionally devastating situation it is. We have gone through months of anxiety riding this runaway roller coaster; only the vengeful individual at the controls knows when it will end.

—Danny Hellman
dannyhellman@mindspring.com

READ MORE ABOUT THE RALL V. HELLMAN LAWSUIT AT THE FOLLOWING URLS ON THE INTERNET:

<http://www.dannyhellman.com>

OR VISIT THE OFFICIAL FREE DIRTY DANNY WEBSITE (HOSTED BY MIKE SPERANZA) AT:

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